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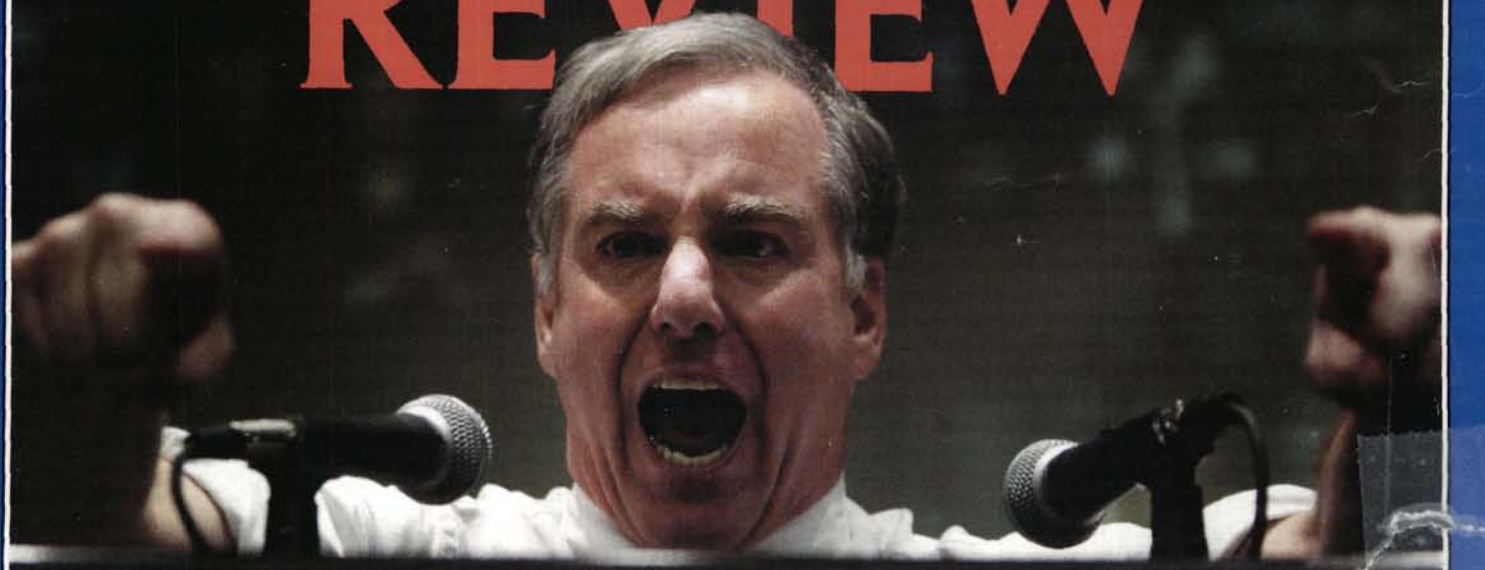

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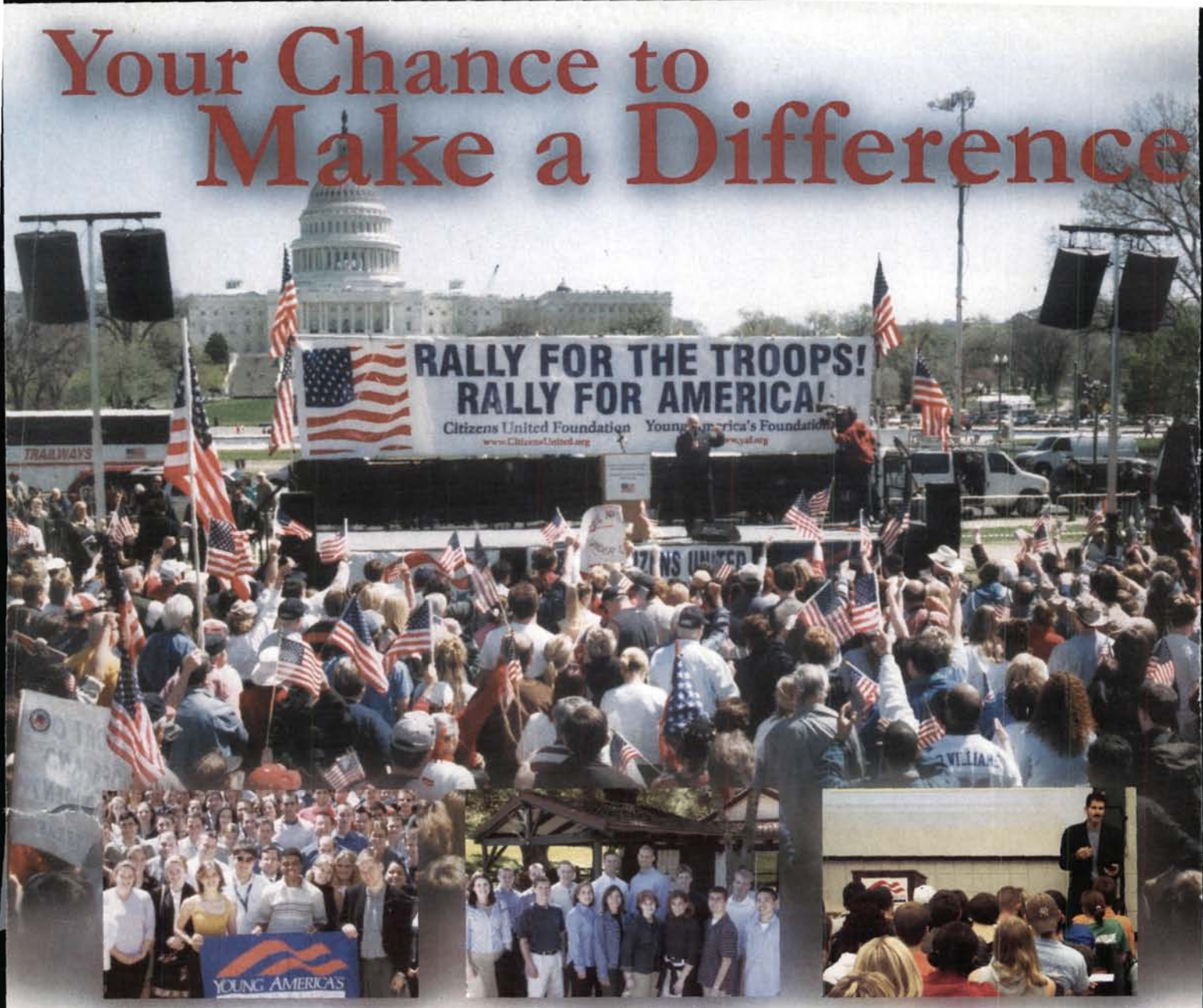

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DECEMBER 22, 2003 VOL. LV, NO. 24

NATIONAL REVIEW

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The Hot, Hot, Hot Candidate

Howard Dean effectively expresses the Democratic party's hyper-multilateralist foreign policy and allergy to the use of force, its old-school big-government economics, and its liberalism on cultural issues. He represents the return of the repressed—a repressed liberalism that is fed up and not going to take it anymore. *By Richard Lowry*

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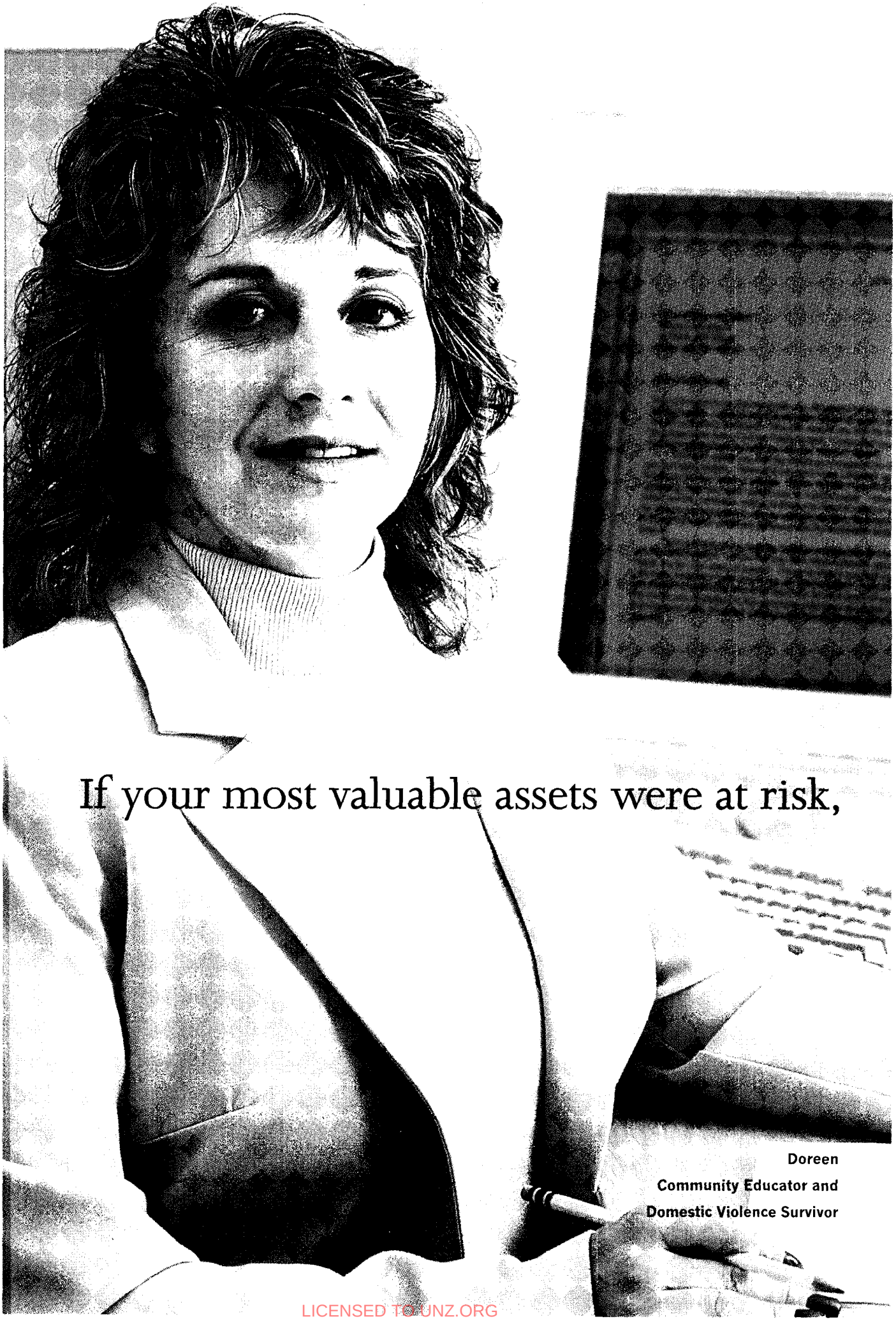

If your most valuable assets were at risk,

Doreen
Community Educator and
Domestic Violence Survivor

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wouldn't you protect them?

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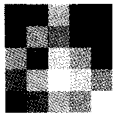

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letters to the editor

"ANGELS" IN AMERICA

I generally do not give political interviews to either left- or right-wing media. But a few weeks ago I agreed to speak to Byron York regarding my involvement in a new talk-radio network ("Liberal Radio and Its Dark Angel: Meet the Amazing Sheldon Drobny," Oct. 27). While I typically do not agree with NATIONAL REVIEW's positions, I recognize that it is a respected conservative publication. So I agreed to give York the interview.

York accurately described me as a venture capitalist and philanthropist, but I should add that I also enjoy researching "lost history." If you read my MakeThemAccountable.com articles objectively, you'll find that I have investigated under-covered points in 20th-century history. In so doing, I have criticized both Democratic and Republican presidents. I criticized Wilson for sending troops to attack the Soviet Union in 1918. I also criticized both the (first) Bush and Clinton administrations for missing an opportunity to positively change formerly Soviet countries after the USSR's collapse.

But despite my body of evenhanded historical analysis, York zeroed in on just one article he found objectionable. In "The Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy," I asserted that most Americans have been shielded, by the fascist censorship of our press, from the knowledge that President George W. Bush's grandfather, Prescott Bush, funded Nazi rearmament. The article was meant to give a perspective on what "fascism" and "corporatism" mean in the context of modern economics and politics. The piece was posted on a website that surely has little influence on this country's political discourse: It was hardly intended to be an earth-shattering article.

What's more, its claims are valid. In fact, York asked me if I believed the Prescott Bush story, and I told him to Google "Bush Nazi" himself. My own attempt yielded over 400,000 hits, including recent articles by credible sources like the AP and the *New Hampshire Gazette*. Despite York's assertions to the contrary, I seek neither to smear, nor to be in the "limelight." I write as a hobby, with little concern for the size of my audience, and claim only what can be credibly supported. I did not accuse our president of being a Nazi, nor did I blame him for his grandfather's deeds. Fascism, as a political and economic force, is not Nazism. And my criticism of our president concerning pre-emptive war is very much in line with mainstream conservative thought.

The Nazi issue—and the question of American industrialists who traded with them—is too important to me to be taken lightly. Both of my parents were immigrants from Poland; my uncle, Chaim Lopata, was a documented hero of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943. So I feel obligated to point out that York's characterizations of me are wrong: The "Dark Angel" of his article is not me, but Prescott Bush and those like him. It is their shame, not mine, that is a horrible stain on our great country.

Sheldon Drobny
Chairman, Paradigm Group, LLC
Northbrook, Ill.

BYRON YORK REPLIES: *Mr. Drobny has been quite cordial, but some of his statements are over the top. For example, he casually refers to the fascist censorship of our press. I don't believe any reasonable look at coverage of the Bush presidency would reveal a fascist censorship. As for Prescott Bush, the accusation that he funded Nazi rearmament is plainly wrong. The AP story to which Drobny refers discussed a German industrialist who at first supported Hitler, broke with the Nazis in 1938, and was imprisoned by Hitler for the duration of the war. Prescott Bush had some (not very close) business ties to that industrialist, and some enemies of the current President Bush have tried to suggest that that somehow means his grandfather supported the Nazis. It's just not true. The other article to which Drobny refers, published in the fringe* New Hampshire Gazette, *was written by an equally fringe "journalist" who has become so carried away with his anti-Bush crusade that he is now running for president. This is not serious stuff.*

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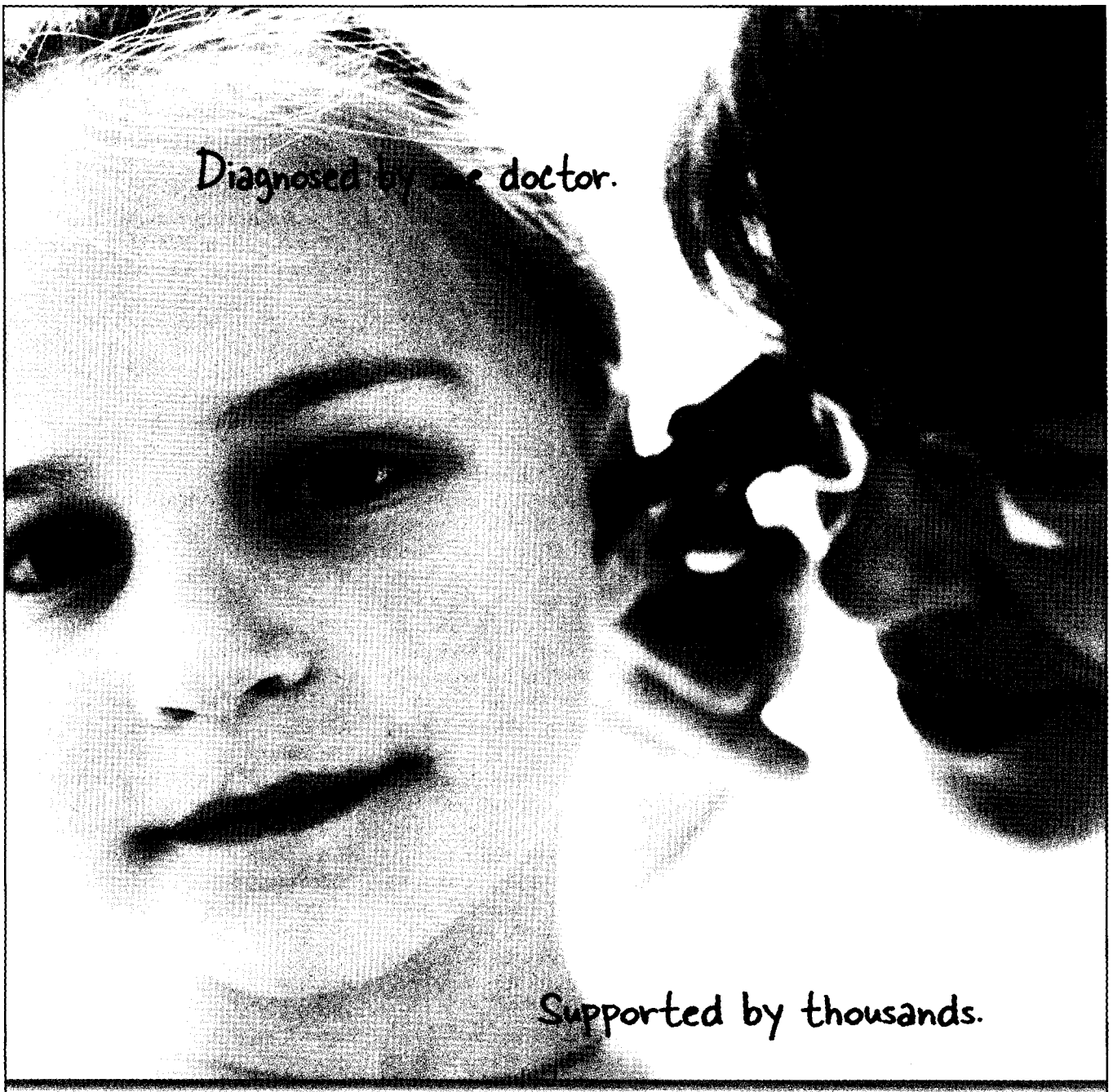

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for the record

"Don't worry—the security camera is for your own protection."

■ In National Annenberg Election Survey poll, President **Bush** earns 61 percent approval rating. . . . Bush in Baghdad: "We did not charge hundreds of miles into the heart of Iraq, pay a bitter cost in casualties, defeat a ruthless dictator, and liberate 25 million people only to retreat before a band of thugs and assassins. We will prevail." . . . Bush at Whitehall in London: "There remains a bit of England in every American. So much of our national character comes from you, and we're glad for it. . . . The British people are the sort of partners you want when serious work needs doing. The men and women of this kingdom are kind and steadfast and generous and brave. And America is fortunate to call this country our closest friend in the world." . . . Retired Gen. **Tommy Franks**, in *Cigar Aficionado*: "To say that nothing has been found that indicated an active chemical and biological program in Iraq, in my view, is simply not true." . . . Federal Reserve chairman **Alan Greenspan**, at Cato Institute: "Some clouds of emerging protectionism have become increasingly evident on today's horizon. . . . It is imperative that creeping protectionism be thwarted and reversed." . . . Treasury secretary **John Snow**, to AP: "I don't know of any administration that has been more forceful, more vigorous in trying to promote the ideas of free trade." . . . Budget deficit expected to hit $500 billion. . . . Heritage Foundation says federal government spends $20,301 per household—largest inflation-adjusted amount since World War II. . . . AmeriCorps receives $170 million boost for 2004, giving it $444 million budget.

■ RNC ad: "Some are now attacking the President for attacking the terrorists." . . . Senate minority leader **Tom Daschle** (D., S.D.) on RNC ad, on NBC: "It's really a repulsive and outrageous attack." . . . **Michael Dukakis**: "This is the worst national administration I've ever lived under, bar none. I want this guy out of there." . . . **Wesley Clark** on Bush, on CBS: "A lot of Americans really love him. They love what he represents, a man who's overcome adversity in his life from alcoholism and pulled his marriage back together and moved forward." . . . Clark says he wouldn't run if **Gore** or **Hillary** were in race, on *Late Show*. . . . More Clark, on Beliefnet.com: "I'm religious. I'm a strong Christian and I'm a Catholic but I go to a Presbyterian church." . . . **Al Sharpton** refuses to apologize for conspiring in **Tawana Brawley** rape lie: "I would apologize if I was wrong." . . . In CBS News poll of Democratic primary voters, 45 percent can't name any presidential candidates.

■ Sen. **Lincoln Chafee** (R., R.I.) on whether he's "inclined" to vote for Bush next year, in *Providence Journal-Bulletin*: "I'm a good Republican." . . . Chafee on why he won't answer "yes" or "no": "That's as far as I'll go." . . . **Paul Weyrich** of Free Congress Foundation endorses Rep. **Pat Toomey** over Sen. **Arlen Specter** in Pennsylvania's GOP primary: "Pat Toomey is the only truly conservative candidate in this race." . . . Rep. **David Dreier** (R., Calif.) says he won't challenge Sen. **Barbara Boxer** (D., Calif.), but former secretary of state **Bill Jones** (R.) might. . . . Gov. **Arnold Schwarzenegger** (R., Calif.) may endorse a woman, former U.S. treasurer **Rosario Marin,** against Boxer in order to mitigate charges of womanizing against him. . . . **Bob Shrum**, longtime confidant of Sen. **Ted Kennedy** (D., Mass.), helps compose Schwarzenegger's inaugural address. . . . Former senator **Bob Smith** (R.) of New Hampshire considers running for Senate from Florida. . . . Rep. **Katherine Harris** (R., Fla.), famous for role in 2000 Florida recount, also may run. . . . Rep. **Ken Lucas** (D., Ky.) says he won't run for reelection, setting up one of country's most competitive House races. . . . Lucas endorses **Nick Clooney**, father of actor **George Clooney**, as successor. . . . Club for Growth's **Steve Moore** on Medicare overhaul, in *Los Angeles Times*: "I worry that Republicans are stepping into a political minefield with this bill."

■ USS *Cole* is deployed for first time since terrorists bombed it in Yemen in 2000. . . . In Fox News poll, 66 percent oppose Massachusetts Supreme Court decision mandating gay marriage. . . . In Gallup poll on greatest president, **Abraham Lincoln** and **John F. Kennedy** tie for first place with 17 percent apiece. **Ronald Reagan** finishes third with 13 percent. . . . Ave Maria Law School announces that its inaugural class achieved a 93 percent pass rate on the most recent Michigan bar examination—the highest among all Michigan law schools.

■ Czech president **Vaclav Klaus**: "The enemies of free societies today are those who want to burden us down again with layer upon layer of regulations. We had that in Communist times. But now if you look at all the new rules and regulations of EU membership, layered bureaucracy is staging a comeback." . . . Anti-apartheid terrorist **Robert McBride**, once sentenced to death for 1986 bombing that killed three people, is appointed police chief of Johannesburg district. "There is no aspect of my past that I am ashamed of," he tells South African Press Association.

■ **Jay Leno**: "At midnight on Monday night almost all of the electricity in Baghdad went out—the whole city blacked out. Sounds like **Gray Davis** has started his new job." **NR**

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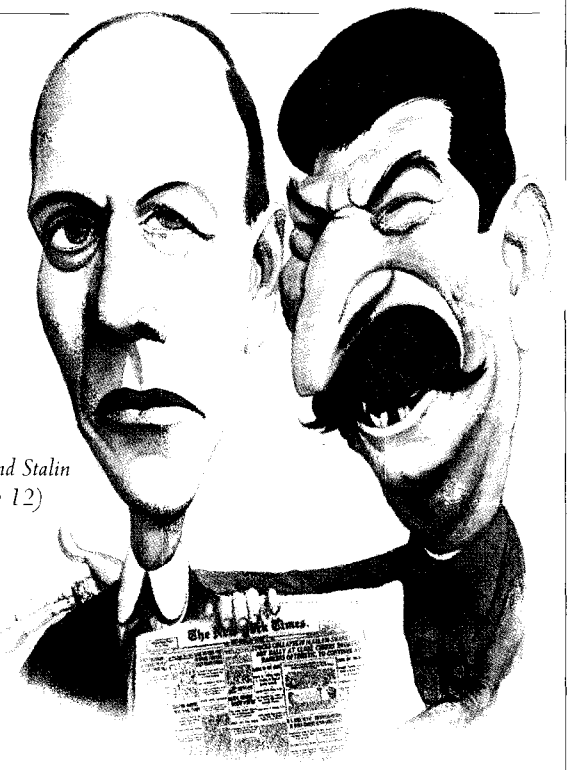
THE WEEK

■ Hey, Howard, you should simply tell 'em, "Those who skied, also served."

■ Was President Bush's Thanksgiving trip to Baghdad political? Was it designed to provide an image—Bush serving turkey and fixings to troops—to supplant an earlier one—Bush on the deck of the U.S.S. *Abraham Lincoln*, in front of the banner declaring "Mission Accomplished"? The answer to both questions is yes, and why not? Politics at its most serious is about intentions and the means to achieve them; as circumstances change, so must the means. When Bush landed on the *Lincoln* on May 1, a mission had been accomplished: As Bush said, "major combat operations" had "ended." He added that there was still "difficult work to do in Iraq." It has proved more difficult, probably, than he expected. But unlike Bill Clinton, he has not sulked, held all-night bull sessions, or asked Dick Morris to take ten polls. He has adjusted his tactics to the situation on the ground, and he went to Baghdad to bond with the troops, and to show America, Iraq, and the world that we would beat the assassins. Call it politics—and leadership.

■ After months of taking incoming rounds from the Democrats, President Bush returned fire in a 30-second ad the Republican National Committee is running in Iowa. The ad says that "some are now attacking the president for attacking the terrorists," and "some call for us to retreat, putting our national security in the hands of others." The response from the Democratic field indicates a direct hit. The rules of engagement they seek to impose permit hysterical charges against the president, but disallow any counterattack as an illegitimate questioning of his opponents' patriotism. Senator Daschle demanded the ad be pulled. According to Wesley Clark, the TV spot amounts to accusing Democrats of "somehow aiding the enemy" and is a violation of "the pledge the president made not to exploit 9/11 for political purposes." It's the Democratic candidates for president who have made Bush's conduct of the War on Terror central to their campaigns. The RNC shouldn't be faulted for turning up the heat in the Democrats' chosen kitchen.

■ Remember Sheldon Drobny? The Chicago millionaire venture capitalist had a brief moment of fame as the founder of a new liberal talk-radio network. Lionized by some on the left, he also gave voice to their worst excesses; he once enthusiastically compared George W. Bush to Adolf Hitler. But Drobny never quite got the new network going, and now he has sold the enterprise to a group of businessmen who seem more likely to do the job. The investors, led by former Internet executive Mark Walsh, are hiring people, building studios, and, perhaps most important, buying radio stations in an attempt to be on the air early next year. They've made other progress as well. For one thing, they realize how boring and didactic previous liberal talk



Duranty and Stalin
(see page 12)

efforts have been. For another, they have finally conceded that they'll never find the mythical Rush Limbaugh of the Left. And they don't like the word "liberal"—Walsh prefers "centrist." It all sounds good until you learn what the new network will actually do. The new bosses are going forward with the previous owners' plans to air shows featuring comedian/Bush-basher Al Franken and comedienne/Bush-basher Janeane Garofalo (who has referred to the Bush administration as "the 43rd Reich"). Given that lineup, it seems likely that no matter how much Walsh wants his new effort to be "centrist," it will end up being a forum for the angry Left. They just can't help themselves.

■ One sometimes gets the impression that President Bush is running a protectionist administration and turning his back on decades of free-trade policies. That impression is incorrect. Administrations of both parties have for years pursued free trade as a general goal while also appeasing selected industries seeking protectionist favors. Such favors invariably impose a net cost on the economy. But since the costs are diffused while the benefits are concentrated, the beneficiaries have a greater incentive to organize politically to keep the favors coming. The steel tariffs that Bush imposed in 2002 conformed to the rule: Any help they gave to steelmakers was more than offset by the damage they did to companies that use steel. The difference this time is that the victims got organized. Political pressure from them, along with the threat of retaliatory tariffs from Europe,

ROMAN GENN

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Do We Need More Troops or Different Troops?

Bruce Berkowitz is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

When U.S. and British forces got bogged down last March in their run to Baghdad, legislators, media pundits, and armchair strategists claimed that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld had skimped on troops. The decisive victory that followed silenced them.

But now that our reconstruction efforts are encountering resistance by die-hard Baathists, foreign fundamentalists, and other assorted ne'er-do-wells, those same critics are now claiming that things would be a lot quieter in Iraq if we had listened to their advice and sent a bigger army to do the job.

Not so. The critics are compounding their earlier error with new ones. In the process, they are also overlooking an important new development—the role of reserves, a critical element in planning the future of the U.S. military.

The critics wanted more *combat forces*. The current situation, however, calls for *peacekeeping* and *nation-building forces*, which means military police who can establish order, public affairs specialists who can disseminate the message of the U.S. government, and civil affairs units who can deliver emergency aid to refugees. It also means intelligence units who can mix in with the local population and track down Saddam Hussein's remaining thugs.

The additional combat forces that the critics wanted back in March would have done little to help us in the current situation. Combat and peacekeeping require completely different capabilities.

Which brings us to the real problem today. The military has trained people in peacekeeping and nation building. But most of them are reservists, and those are the ones the Defense Department will need to rely more heavily on in the next few months.

The Pentagon claims that by 2004, 105,000 troops will be in Iraq, down from the current 130,000. Just over a third of those will be reservists—nearly three times as many as now.

Reservists disproportionately make up the forces used in peacekeeping and nation building. Ninety-seven percent of the army's civil affairs specialists are reservists; 82 percent of public affairs specialists are reservists. The figures are only slightly higher for military police, intelligence, and special forces.

Because it will be difficult to keep these people away from their civilian jobs, U.S. officials may come under pressure to cut the reconstruction process short, which could be disastrous.

Our current predicament is a legacy of the cold war, when it was assumed that reservists would be needed only for a short period and most likely in friendly locales, such as mopping-up operations in West Germany after a hypothetical Soviet invasion.

The situation has flip-flopped. The part of the war that combat forces perform is brief. But the operations in which reservists specialize—the war *after* the war—can take ten times as long.

Because we are likely to see this pattern repeated, we need to rethink our force structure. We may need to add more active-duty forces in noncombatant specialties or use more reservists in combat. Or we may need to spend more on defense.

Those are the costs of leading a war on terrorists and rogue states. The alternative is to rely on other countries or the UN—both of which have been unwilling to act decisively. Or we could hunker down and risk another attack like September 11. Today's debates over military reserve policy are really debates over America's role in the world.

—Bruce Berkowitz

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THE WEEK...

convinced the Bush administration to back off. The tariffs will go. But the administration has handed out a new favor: The textile industry will be protected from the menace of cheap Chinese lingerie. As we said before, this kind of small-scale protectionism is routine. The Clinton administration, often described as ardent for free trade, indulged in it. But the Clinton administration also took political risks to promote its broader free-trade agenda. So far, the Bush administration has sadly failed to take such risks.

■ After three years of work by the administration and Congress, the energy bill had become a nearly perfect piece of Washington bipartisanship: It was 1,700 pages of special-interest giveaways, almost devoid of worthwhile reforms. Bush was pushing for its passage, and Tom Daschle was cooperative. After all, there were giveaways for South Dakota in the bill. But then the labor unions and Senate liberals noticed that there were still one or two free-market provisions in the bill, and decided to oppose it on that basis. A few Republican senators opposed the bill for the right reasons. The bill failed. Bush and Senate majority leader Bill Frist vow to take it up again next year. In that case, the dissenting Republicans will need to muster the will to say no again.

■ Reportedly, the IRS is auditing the National Education Association, and students of the union's political practices are betting that its new-math approach to its tax returns will flunk the exam. The Landmark Legal Foundation first filed a complaint against the NEA in 2000, giving the IRS reams of documents detailing how the union spends tens of millions of its tax-exempt funds on politics—which is illegal. For the past ten years, the NEA has claimed in its tax returns to spend "zero" general revenues on political activities. That duplicity lets them dodge taxes. It also keeps teachers in the dark about how their dues are used, which prevents them from asserting their right to a refund of dues spent on politics. Everyone talks about "accountability" in education. Let's hope we now get some.

THE GREAT MEDICARE ROBBERY

Talk about your guilty pleasures:
Curses filled the air
When the Grand Old Party heisters
Purloined Medicare.
"Whither red ink?" thundered Teddy;
"Grab your wallet," wailed
Daschle, but the AARP's
Switcheroo prevailed.

—W. H. VON DREELE

■ What is wrong with this headline? 46 IRAQIS DIE IN FIERCE FIGHT / BETWEEN REBELS AND G.I.'S (*New York Times*, December 1). The dead were from Iraq. But we are not at war with Iraq. Saddam Hussein's regime, which we fought, is gone. Iraq is a nation of 25 million people, that was dominated by a totalitarian political movement, the remnants of which we are fighting. Calling the attackers "rebels" calls up Washington at Valley Forge, or Delacroix's *Liberty Guiding the People*. Willmoore Kendall defined a liberal as someone who would not take his own side in a fight. That is true; what is true and worse is that a liberal is someone whose moral compass is regularly misled by random slag heaps.

■ Public events pass before us, cloaked and blurry, in blizzards of talk, and then someone writes something that floods the scene with light. President Bush's Thanksgiving trip to Baghdad was hailed by an Iraqi blogger, whose *nom d'Internet* is "The Mesopotamian." His blog greeted the president as a "friend and ally," and regretted that crowds could not come out to greet him as he deserved. Then he produced an almost Biblical sentence: "The bones in the mass graves salute you, Avenger of the Bones." Iraqis, Americans, Mr. Bush: Remember that one.

■ In certain European quarters, there has been a depressing squeamishness about confronting the proliferators of doomsday weapons. So perhaps it isn't surprising that, when the International Atomic Energy Agency entertained the idea of reporting Iran's longstanding and clandestine nuclear-weapons program to the U.N. Security Council, squeamishness won the day. Germany, France, and Britain persuaded the U.S. to back an IAEA resolution that "strongly deplores" Iran's nuke program without sending the matter to the U.N. Supporters of this approach claim it was necessary to avoid undermining reformers within the Iranian theocracy. That's rather a rosy way of looking at things—and it risks simply giving Iran's hardliners more time to realize their nuclear ambitions. Any further deception or heel-dragging on Iran's part must be met with more than a slap on the wrist. We should heed undersecretary of state John R. Bolton's words in a recent speech: "Whether the nuclear capabilities of states like Iran, North Korea, and others are threats today, or 'only' threats 'tomorrow,' there can be no dispute that our attention is required now before the threats become reality, and tens of thousands of innocent civilians, or more, have been vaporized."

■ The European Left and a good many of the 10 million or more Muslim immigrants on the continent come together in the common cause of hating Israel. Inevitably their generalized attack on Jews results in random murder, bombings of Jewish schools and synagogues and shops, and anti-Jewish demonstrations, just as it was in the run-up to Hitlerism. Proud to be the standard-bearer of progressive values, the European Union has a Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia. This center commissioned a study from another standard-bearer of progressive values, the Anti-Semitism Research Institute of the Technical University of Berlin. The study duly reported the self-evident fact that the Left's raging against Israel incites young Muslims to increasingly frequent and violent anti-

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What Happens to America's Displaced Workers?

The assumption behind U.S. trade policy is that the American economy will produce enough good-paying new jobs for all those workers displaced by increased foreign imports. Yet, this assumption may no longer be valid.

Since February 2001, the U.S. economy has had a net loss of more than 2 million jobs. The last time this happened was in the early 1930s during the Hoover Administration.

A succession of Presidents and Congressional leaders, who pushed trade deals such as NAFTA, promised America that service jobs would be available for retrained workers whose factory job moved offshore. But that promise has not been kept.

Increased globalization, created by recent trade agreements, has cost this country 2.7 million manufacturing jobs over the past 38 months. And now, as corporations and state governments outsource service jobs, such as engineering, architectural work, software development, and accounting to low-wage countries such as India and China - even these U.S. jobs are at risk.

But, what happens to workers who lose their jobs to globalization? The data is available.

Since 1984, the U.S. Labor Department has tracked displaced workers and it is no surprise that recent studies characterize this group as widely distressed.

Nearly half the four million displaced workers cited plant or company closings or moves as *the reason for their displacement.*

One-third of these displaced workers lost jobs in manufacturing. This share was much greater than manufacturing's 19 percent of total long-tenured U.S. employment.

The reemployment rate for displaced manufacturing workers was 56 percent lower than the overall reemployment for displaced workers.

Of the 2.3 million workers who lost full-time jobs, 1.9 million were employed again by January 2002. But of these, only 48 percent were earning as much or more in their new jobs as they had earned on the job they lost. And 29 percent reported earning losses of 20 percent or more.

U.S. leaders can no longer assume that American workers displaced by foreign imports will get comparable or better replacement jobs. *Most will not.*

And Congress should not sacrifice good manufacturing jobs for a false promise of a better one.

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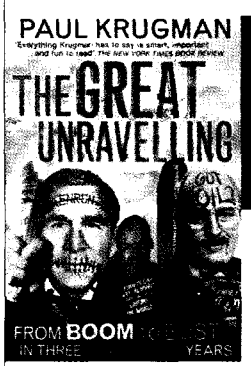
Semitism in all its many manifestations. Appalled to be confronted with the incontestable evidence of what's happening, the Monitoring Center has trashed the findings of the report, is suppressing its publication, and is asking for a rewrite in order to reach quite different conclusions. In this best of all possible Europes, fear of giving offense to Muslim extremists has priority over human rights for Jews.

■ Old Communists never die, they just fade away. Eduard Shevardnadze took his time to fade away. In the Seventies he was general secretary of the Communist party in his native Georgia, ranking as a KGB general. His ruthlessness with rivals was notorious, and so was his toadying to Brezhnev. Under Gorbachev, he became a reformed character as foreign minister, one of the maestros of perestroika and glasnost. When the Soviet Union fell apart, he returned to Georgia, for the last lap of his career as president of a now sovereign state. He liked to present himself as a benevolent despot, but the habits of Communism died hard. Minorities were suppressed, corruption flourished, the prisons filled, and dissidents came to mysterious ends. Blatantly rigging an election against a democratic opposition, he finally went too far. Angry and partly armed crowds filled the streets. There'd been civil war in the recent past, and it was on the verge of breaking out again. In command of the police, the hard-line interior minister was willing to open fire on the crowds. But like his former boss Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, in the crunch, rejected bloodshed, resigned, and went home to allow another velvet revolution to take place. It's not possible to feel sorry for him, but the manner of his departing calls for a measure of forgiveness.

■ Michael Jackson is accursed, largely through his own deeds. Having lost his talent and his popularity, he has lost (if he ever had) his mind, living in a grotesque simulacrum of permanent childhood. Now he is to be tried for child molesting. A jury will come to a decision, as will the public (we are perfectly free, despite what priggish commentators tell us, to anticipate verdicts or judge them mistaken, as O. J. Simpson's acquittal clearly was). Things certainly look bleak for Jackson. Keep in mind, however, that children's testimony must be carefully evaluated, and that failure to do so produced a rash of unjust pedophilia convictions in the Eighties. Let us hope that Jackson is guilty of nothing more than self-destruction.

■ As we go to press, a congressional bulletin tells us that: "The U.S. Capitol Holiday Tree is scheduled to arrive at the West Front of the Capitol . . . on December 1." This year's Holiday Tree, we are further informed, is from the Boise national forest in Idaho. It will be decorated with more than 6,000 holiday ornaments and 10,000 colored holiday lights. Residents of Washington, D.C., will be able to admire the Holiday Tree as they bustle around doing their holiday shopping. Many of us will, of course, decorate our own homes with holiday lights and holiday wreaths. In our living rooms we shall put up holiday trees very much like the Capitol's Holiday Tree, though of course much smaller. Under our holiday trees we shall pile holiday presents. To our friends and loved ones we shall send holiday cards. Perhaps we shall take our children to see a holiday show—a stage performance of Charles Dickens's much-loved fable *A Holiday Carol*, perhaps. On Holiday Eve we may be serenaded by carol singers with "The Twelve Days of Holiday" or "We Wish You A Merry Holiday!" Then we shall read the little ones to sleep with Clement Clarke Moore's classic poem "'Twas the night before Holiday." On Holiday itself we shall open our holiday presents and eat our holiday dinner, then settle down to watch the holiday specials on TV. Remember, Holiday comes but once a year, so—Merry Holiday!

■ One of the foulest crimes against humanity in living memory was the famine deliberately caused by Josef Stalin in the Ukraine. At the time, Walter Duranty of the *New York Times* took a journey through the region, and saw the corpses of the dead and dying, many of them by the roadside and the train tracks. There was no need to fuss about a few unimportant local shortages, he then reported in a series of articles for the *Times*, and for this he was awarded the Pulitzer prize in 1932. This archetypal fellow-traveler lied gladly for the Soviets, and his lies have dishonored the Pulitzer prize and the *Times* ever since. Ukrainians first and foremost have never forgiven him. The latest move to have Duranty's prize revoked has failed. The Pulitzer board says there's no evidence of deliberate deception, though that of course disqualifies Duranty outright as a reporter. Arthur Sulzberger Jr., publisher of the *Times*, thinks that revoking the prize would be like the Soviet practice of airbrushing people out of history. Hold on: It was Duranty who was airbrushing out victims by the million. But the Pulitzer board and Sulzberger do join in "extending sympathy to those who suffered." How very, very kind of them.



Krugman's writings: as nutty as the images on the (U.K.) cover

"Undignified." "Silly." That's how *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman described the cover of the U.K. edition of his recent book, *The Great Unraveling*. The cover caters to the voracious European appetite for anti-Americanism, mimicking the nutty, cartoonish placards carried at protest rallies: Bush brandishing a wad of money, with "ENRON" tattooed on his forehead, a Hitlerian Cheney with a seeping oil mustache and the words "GOT OIL?" on *his* forehead . . . And that's not all: The U.K. subtitle reads, "From Boom to Bust in Three Scandalous Years." Contrast this to the U.S. version, which carries a rather more anodyne text cover and the vague subtitle "Losing Our Way in the New Century." Krugman's writings can be every bit as cartoonish and nutty as the images on the cover, of course, so at least the U.K. version will get points for truth-in-advertising.

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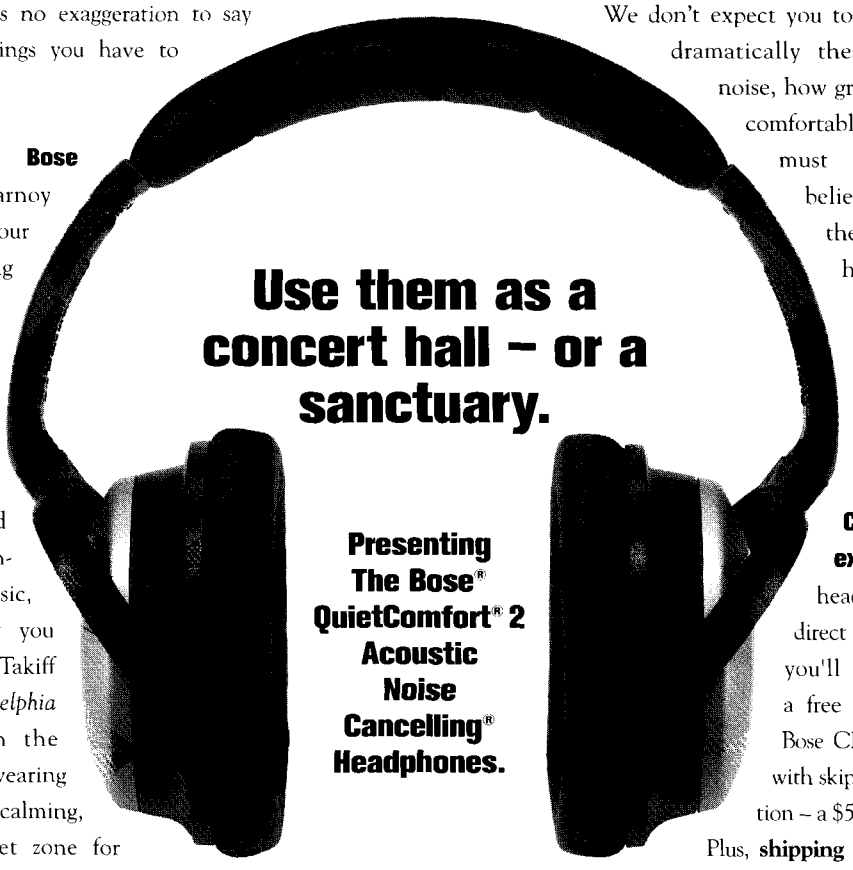

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■ Carlos Eire is this year's recipient of the National Book Award for nonfiction. Who is Eire? He is a professor of history and religious studies at Yale, and the author of a memoir, *Waiting for Snow in Havana*, which won the award. The book depicts with humor the joys of childhood in Cuba. But it depicts more acutely the pain of separation, and the immigrant's struggle to scratch a life from nothing. Eire and his brother came to the United States in Operation Pedro Pan. Their mother eventually joined them, but their father, a municipal judge with a taste for French art and history, stayed behind to guard their home and his paintings, assuming the Communists' time would be brief. He was wrong, and Eire never saw him—or anyone else who stayed—again. But while his relatives could not escape, their stories did: stories of resistance brutally stamped out. Eire's story is theirs too, and is for all of those who saw their Cuba lost. Since it is a story that many people are loath to hear, the National Book Award comes as a pleasant, heartening surprise.

■ The U.S. Postal Service has decided to insult history and human decency by issuing a stamp in honor of Paul Robeson. According to David Failor of the Postal Service, in the words of the Associated Press, "There was strong support from the public for a stamp honoring Robeson, who was labeled a subversive for his mid-century activism against racism and anti-Semitism." Thank you, Ministry of Truth. If Paul Robeson opposed anti-Semitism, it certainly wasn't during the Hitler-Stalin Pact. He was an anti-fascist only after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. He was famous as a singer, as in Jerome Kern's *Showboat* during the 1920s. But the songs he sang later were those not of Jerome Kern but of Josef Stalin, hamming it up much of the time in Moscow. He supported the Great Purges and the Gulag; he was a menace to dissidents. It would have been more honest to put Gus Hall on a postage stamp. If Robeson never joined the Party, he was cheating it out of its dues. If honoring this Kremlin toady is supposed to honor American blacks, it is a condescending insult to the tens of thousands of black Americans who fought for their country in its and their wars.

MARRIAGE

Conservative Confusions

In the weeks since the Massachusetts supreme court decided to impose gay marriage on the state, social conservatives have been losing the political debate over the issue. Already the language is changing. Democratic presidential candidates have even started referring to "non-same-sex marriage," and columnists to "op-sex marriage"—by which they mean what we all used to describe, before November, simply as "marriage."

Republicans have not decided how to respond to the court. Constitutional amendments to prohibit gay marriage have been introduced in both the House and the Senate. But proponents of the amendment have not decided how broadly it should be drawn. The White House has not said whether it would support an amendment. Some Republican leaders remain confused about the legal landscape. Speaker Denny Hastert, for example, has suggested that action can wait until a court strikes down the Defense of Marriage Act. He might be waiting forever: The courts could impose gay marriage on all 50 states without touching that act.

Several prominent conservative commentators have declared their opposition to a constitutional amendment. Their arguments deserve to be taken seriously. But they are not, in our view, persuasive.

We assume that David Brooks, now a columnist for the *New York Times*, opposes the amendment for the most straightforward of reasons: He supports gay marriage. Conservatives, he argues, should not just "allow" gay marriage but "insist" on it. Social pressures should be brought to bear on homosexuals so that they will refrain from promiscuity and settle down to married life. If that is the conservative case for gay marriage, what would the utopian one be? Brooks writes that many conservatives "have latched on to biological determinism (men are savages who need women to tame them) as a convenient way to oppose gay marriage." He continues, "But in fact we are not animals whose lives are bounded by our flesh and by our gender. We're moral creatures with souls, endowed with the ability to make covenants, such as the one Ruth made with Naomi: 'Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. . . .'"

One possible confusion should be cleared up at the outset: The Bible does not imply that Ruth and Naomi were anything but daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, as unwary readers of Brooks's column may have inferred. Turning to Brooks's argument: It is not true that conservatives came up with the idea that men and women are different and complementary in order to justify opposition to gay marriage. It is a longstanding and sincere belief. It is also one that happens to be true. People have souls, but our lives are also bounded by our flesh and by our gender. Marriage is not only a union of souls; it is two persons becoming "one flesh" (and, in the procreative act, not merely metaphorically). If biology is so easily transcended, by the way, shouldn't homosexuals just turn heterosexual?

Jonah Goldberg and David Horowitz suggest that it would be wrong to enact a constitutional amendment that a large section of the population bitterly hates. Perhaps it would be wrong. It would also be impossible. It is very hard to amend the Constitution (at least if you're not the Supreme Court). An amendment cannot pass without first achieving a social consensus that it is necessary. The process of enacting the amendment is the process of forming that consensus. The fact that the consensus does not currently exist is not an argument against trying to create it.

George Will offers two reasons for opposing the amendment. The first is that it would prevent us from getting "evidence" about whether gay marriage would strengthen or weaken marriage. This is a curious objection for Will to make, because in the very same column he explains quite well that the Massachusetts court's view of marriage—the view that marriage is (only) a union of souls that bear reciprocal affections—makes it impossible in principle to object to polygamy. We need

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no social-science "evidence" to see that. We already have evidence from history about what polygamous societies look like, and about what sexual mores and family structures are most suitable to republican society.

What more "evidence" do we need? Do we need to find out whether gay marriages would be more likely to end in divorce than conventional marriages? Whether the children of gay couples would be more likely to have health problems than other children? Whether they would get sent to the principal's office more often? Only an intellectual would believe that the desirability of gay marriage turns on such questions. The problem may be that Will begins by stating that the debate about gay marriage concerns whether same-sex couples should be "excluded" from marriage. But if marriage requires sexual complementarity, then such couples cannot be "included." Gay marriage is a redefinition of marriage, not just an expansion of it.

Will's second argument is that "[c]onstitutionalizing social policy is generally a misuse of fundamental law." The key word here is "generally." The Constitution should not decide substantive questions but rather allocate the responsibility for deciding them. In the absence of an amendment, however, the courts are very likely to insert a liberal resolution of the issue into the Constitution. Conservatives have for the most part avoided using the courts to advance their preferred social policies. Liberals have no such compunctions. Now we are told that conservatives should also refrain from asking the people to use the amendment process to pre-empt the courts from imposing liberal policies. Maybe conservatives should just quit American politics altogether.

Many conservatives have been tempted to do exactly that over the years. Political activism by evangelical Christians was, for decades, practically non-existent. If social conservatives are told that the issues that most concern them, notably abortion and gay marriage, are going to be settled by the courts; that they have no political recourse; and that the Republican party is not going to stir itself to do anything about the situation—well, then, it will be awfully hard to explain to them why they should show up at the voting booth, let alone lick envelopes and knock on doors through the fall, to help the party. As Republican politicians read the conservative columnists and try to figure out what to do about marriage, they have to think about considerations far weightier than mere electoral advantage. But the political stakes are not trivial. If the conservative coalition does not take effective action to fight judicial liberalism, the conservative coalition will not survive.

MEDICARE

The AARP Republicans

A LOT of Republican arms were twisted to get the Medicare bill through Congress. A lot of Republican principles, too. The bill increases the program's spending by—at least—$400 billion over the next ten years, and trillions more thereafter. It does very little to open the program to private-sector competition. Scaling back free-market reforms was the price Republicans paid to win the endorsement of the AARP, the liberal seniors lobby. The boldest reforms to the program have been reduced to a few demonstration projects. Starting in 2010. One wonders why they bothered to include them at all.

We do not quite blame the president and his party for the massive expansion of Medicare. The idea of adding a prescription-drug benefit to the program was bound to be expensive, and it was too popular to resist. It also makes a certain amount of sense. If the federal government is going to provide the elderly with health care, medicine ought to be part of the package. In the late 1990s, almost all Republicans agreed to provide the benefit—presidential candidate George W. Bush very much included.

The Bush administration's initial hope was that drug benefits could be linked tightly to reform: Seniors would be able to get the drug benefit only if they signed up for a reformed Medicare. But House Republicans rejected that idea, and it probably lacked the popular support necessary to pass Congress. So the administration's choices were constrained.

Still, the administration could have tried to keep the price tag low by providing benefits only to those in real need. But business groups, anxious to shift their health costs to the taxpayer, lobbied strongly for a universal benefit. So the administration decided to provide some benefits, however paltry, to everyone. Bush could also have held out for a more free-market bill and dared the Democrats to block it. He decided not to do that. Conservatives in the House who balked at the bill were even told that if it did not pass, an even worse Democratic bill would probably pass Congress—and that Bush would sign that, too. The tactic worked. It was also disgraceful.

Bush could have held out for a more free-market bill and dared the Democrats to block it. He decided not to do that.

Republicans will find that their vaunted alliance with the AARP will not last long. The organization endorsed the bill with reservations. It wanted more spending, and even less free-market reform. Soon, it will be joining with Ted Kennedy to expand the drug benefit and otherwise "fix" the bill. The Republicans, by loudly proclaiming AARP to be the arbiter of pro-elderly policies, will have put themselves in a fix of their own.

The White House is said to be concerned about conservative unrest. (It should be.) That unrest will only grow if the administration's response is to lecture conservatives about why they should have supported the bill. It should, instead, pledge to do what it can to limit the damage. Specifically, it must make sure that the new Health Savings Accounts that the bill creates are not strangled by regulations. It should loosen the regulations on existing private-sector competition in Medicare.

The Health Savings Accounts are the principal achievement of the bill. The theory behind them is that the dysfunction of American health care begins with the way the tax code encourages people to get health insurance from their employers. That policy raises health costs. It means that losing your job, or even switching jobs, often entails losing your insurance. It calls into being rationing devices such as HMOs so that employers can control costs. The new health accounts extend tax breaks to

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individuals who pay out-of-pocket for their own routine health-care needs and buy insurance to cover catastrophes. Any individual can own the new accounts—you don't have to be a Medicare beneficiary. Employers can contribute to them. If they catch on, consumers will be empowered, more people will have catastrophic coverage, a rational pricing structure will begin to emerge, and costs will fall.

It follows that Republicans should do what they can to allow the accounts to succeed. The last attempt to create them, in 1997, failed because Ted Kennedy designed regulations to ensure failure. This time, Republicans have to design them correctly, and publicize their availability.

What may be most important is that Republicans prepare themselves to resist future attempts to expand Medicare. That is not easy work. The existence of an entitlement creates a constituency for more and more government, and constantly undermines the party perceived as less enthusiastic about government activism. Maybe Republicans should have thought of that before they passed this bill.

OBITUARY

Hugh Kenner, R.I.P.

He died late on November 24, and I had the news of his death early the next day. Mary Anne Kenner was weeping as she spoke, and I wasn't able to hear everything she told me, though I learned that his daughter Lisa, my goddaughter, had been with them, and that father, mother, and daughter had attended Mass the day before.

I called my friend Christopher Lehmann-Haupt on the *New York Times*, but got only his answering service. But he returned my call some time after noon, and called again a few moments later to say that the "desk" at the *Times* demanded an obituary by 6 P.M. Could he prepare an obit on Hugh Kenner in three hours? Impossible! Happily, Lehmann-Haupt had himself reviewed the most famous of the 25 books that Kenner wrote, and was well informed on the enormous impact *The Pound Era* had and continues to have on the literary community. It conferred on Kenner a near-undisputed eminence. The deadline was met, and the next day's paper carried the headline right across the page: "Hugh Kenner, Commentator on Literary Modernism, Pound and Joyce, Is Dead at 80." On Saturday, the *Times* carried a candidly appreciative essay by Benjamin Ivry. The headline here was, "A Critic Whose Scholarship / Gleamed With His Writing." The lead sentence: "Hugh Kenner, who died at 80 at his home in Athens, Ga., this week, was among the finest writers of critical prose in America. He was one of the few commentators whose books and articles cause delight and stand as literary achievements in their own right, including 'Gnomon: Essays in Contemporary Literature' (1958); 'Dublin's Joyce' (1955); 'The Stoic Comedians: Flaubert, Joyce and Beckett' (1964); 'The Counterfeiters: An Historical Comedy' (1968), the latter two illustrated by the writer and artist Guy Davenport; 'The Pound Era' (1971)."

* * *

We were very good friends and, for many years, very close friends (I served as best man at his wedding in 1965 to Mary Anne Bittner, a year after the death of his first wife, Mary Josephine Waite). We had met in the late Fifties by chance—we both had books scheduled for publication by the same publishing firm, McDowell Obolensky. A friendship ripened. He and Mary Jo visited with me in Connecticut, I with them in Santa Barbara; later with him and Mary Anne in Baltimore, still later in Athens. We sailed a half-dozen times on my boat, and when it ran fatally onto the rocks during a hurricane, his grief moved him to an uncharacteristic mode. His threnody spoke of a boat that had "done much for her friends, in the summers before her side was stove in. She had taken them all around the Sound and along the New England coast, and even to Bermuda (thrice), and shown them Wood's Hole, and the Great Fish that eats taffrail logs, and the Kraken, and the strange men of Onset with their long faces, and perfect Edgartown; and lapped them at night gently to rest; and given them the wind and sun and made for them a place of adventure and refreshment and peace; and taught them this, that beyond illusion it is possible to be for hours and days on end perfectly and inexpressibly happy."

Happiness of any kind was sharply interrupted soon after the boat's end when Mary Jo, the mother of five children, contracted cancer, dying in a few months. Hugh recovered with the help of Mary Anne, with whom he would have two more children. He industriously pursued his academic career at the University of California at Santa Barbara, then at Johns Hopkins, and finally at the University of Georgia. "How come you agreed to move to Athens?" I asked him. We spoke to each other with great candor. He answered, in the clinical mode in which he often spoke, that the University of Georgia was seeking academic eminence. "If they want to do that in the field of chemistry or engineering they have to invest 25 million dollars in a new lab. If they want it in the humanities, they can just hire me."

He was happy in Athens, where, he told me, he taught the most talented students he had ever encountered, as also the dumbest. And he was busy worldwide. "It seems that we shall be making our first visit to Spain early in June. They are having a Pound Conference in Barcelona. It fits nicely just before the Joyce Conference in Monaco, which we were scheduled to attend anyway but must leave prematurely to be in Evanston for Lisa's graduation June 16. Any recommendations re Barcelona?" On his 70th birthday at his home, his son Rob and I were summoned as guests to an intimate dinner, marred only by his resolution to quit tobacco.

His sense of his own standing was probably resented by some of his colleagues. Envy is easy to do, but it wasn't easy to dispute his claims to pre-eminence. When talking about himself—until recent years, always with lit cigarette in hand—he was a singular phenomenon. There was the disordered crown of bushy hair stretching from ear to ear atop a 6-foot-4 frame. Most noticeable was the odd accent. He spoke as

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THE NORTH POLE

Dear *NR* Friend,

Sure, we'll have a Merry Christmas, but it's that New Year I'm worried about -- it's sure to fall short of being "happy." That's tough for a jolly guy to admit. But we must face facts: 2004 will be a vitriolic, partisan, humbug-filled election year.

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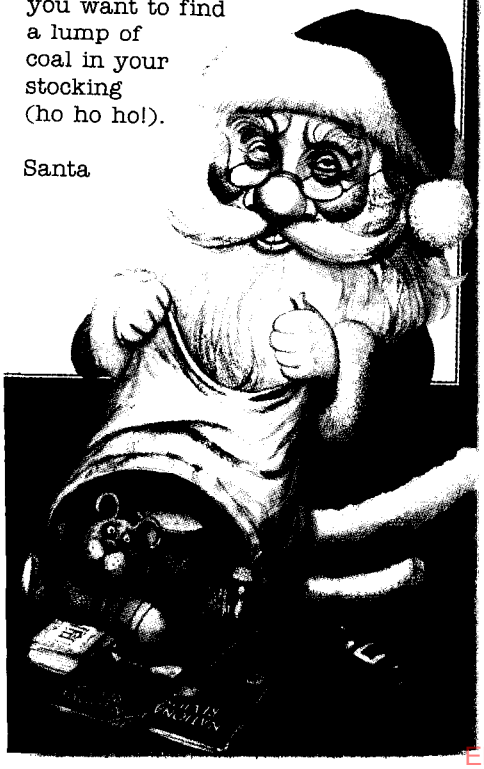
Santa



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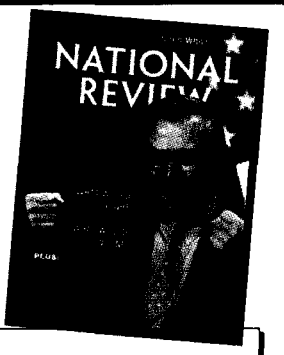

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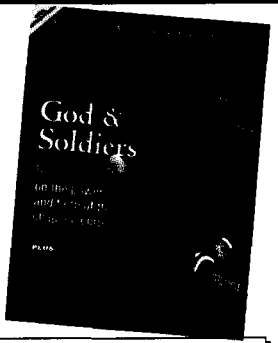

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though to a computer wired to learn the range of phonemes in the language. To communicate these exactly, the speaker was pronouncing his words with exaggerated clarity. The reason for this oddity was that as a very young child, the son of a schoolmaster in Canada, he was abandoned medically as deaf. His hearing, however, returned, though never wholly. The years of muteness required him to learn to speak afresh, causing that odd exactitude of enunciation. The words came with an astonishing lucidity. He wrote as he spoke, his command of language mesmerizing and awesome. He did not question his powers, or belittle his accomplishments. He managed a look of childlike innocence whenever the subject of his attainments was tangentially raised, much as a prince would react to mention of his bloodline. Anyone questioning it was thought of by everyone, himself included, as simply uninformed.

* * *

Not everyone (myself included) has the background to evaluate his scholarship, or even, in the densest of his work, to comprehend it fully, let alone revel in it. His knowledge in his own field was comprehensive, and his use of it, fluent, commanding, and enterprising. We dined once in Switzerland with Charlie Chaplin, and went on to a nightclub. Chaplin was spotted at the door, and the musicians swung immediately into "Terry's Theme" from *Limelight*. Chaplin acknowledged the greeting by doing a gig from vaudeville. He turned his back to the assembly and squatted down so that all the viewers could see was his black homburg over the black overcoat. His head swaying to the beat of the music, he is examining the window of the art shop, and now he spots the painting of the naked lady. His interest springs to life and with deft use of a hidden cane, he appears to elongate to 8 feet tall, the better to appease his appetite. The band played on as Chaplin sat down at the bar and lectured to Hugh Kenner about comedy. But the next day, pleading preoccupations, he denied Kenner's petition to spend time with him at his home in Corsier to elaborate on the subject; Hugh completed his book (*The Stoic Comedians*) without the benefit of more time with the master.

He was generous to friends with whom I involved him, while never compromising the remove he felt as a teacher with definitive things to say.

The range of his interests was extensive. Before deciding finally to get his doctorate in English (at Yale) he considered mathematics as an alternative discipline. It was he who introduced me to computers. My own interest was all but exclusively in the use of the computer as a word processor. But imposing on his familiarity with the general discipline and preying on his exposure to sailing, I took to him some years ago a problem. For the purpose of celestial navigation, I wanted to be able to take a star sight, or a planet sight, without knowing what the object was when I shot it and then, knowing the time of the observation, to identify the star and establish the exact position of my boat. Such a program would prove very useful for the sailor. Suddenly, at sea, you spot a little, nubile spark overhead. But perhaps clouds are moving in. Or perhaps there is overcast, and the star peeps out at you only for an instant or two. You grab your sextant and shoot it; then you go below. There you struggle, not knowing which was the star that bared itself to you. You fuss with the Star Finder, you diddle with the HO 249 tables, play out your assumed position. And after ten minutes of work, maybe fifteen, you say, Er, that ecdysiast star must have been Achenar. Maybe it was—but then maybe it wasn't.

"What did you ask Professor Kenner to do, and by the way, why him?" the editor of *Yachting* asked me.

"To answer the second question first," I replied, "I tapped him because he is a personal friend and was willing to take the 200 hours it required to dope out and write the program. I needed someone who is a whiz with computers; but I also wanted a sworn enemy of clumsy instructional prose. As a supremely gifted writer, Hugh Kenner would devise instructions for WhatStar (catch . . . already . . . the simple beauty of the program's name?) that anyone could read and understand." So to speak.

I concluded the piece for *Yachting* by asking myself with grand condescension a loaded question, and then giving my own confident answer to it: "I am told by the blasé community that the sextant is going out of fashion, that what with Loran in so many parts of the world, and GPS only a season or two away, the sextant is anachronized." My comment: "Yawp. And cigarette lighters will anachronize the match . . . So, when you next use your sextant, avoid such pains in star identification as are associated with it which are avoidable. And think lovingly of Hugh Kenner when you use WhatStar." Twenty years after Hugh Kenner devised WhatStar, the Naval Academy stopped teaching celestial navigation to its students.

* * *

He wrote often, always by e-mail when that became possible, and always brightly. He was generous to friends with whom I involved him, while never compromising the remove he felt as a teacher with definitive things to say. There was sometimes a trace of impatience when he suspected sluggishness at the other end. He once addressed me so abruptly—I had not carried out a particular instruction, and so confused Antares with Saturn—that I felt the need to rebuke him. I did this by failing to acknowledge two or three of his missives; all of that was quickly repaired.

His dismissive skills were not retired. I introduced him to a regular correspondent, an elderly man who managed to feign an office job while spending his entire time reading books and writing letters. Charles Wallen had remarked, reprovingly, my use of a word he thought arcane. I defended the word and forwarded his complaint to Kenner, our mutual friend. Kenner wrote him,

> Dear Charles:
>
> Bill's point is precisely that there is no substitute for "solipsism." If what pains you about it is simply the fact that you seldom hear it, then the fault is not in the man who grinds it against your ears, but in the millions of part-time and largely inadvertent solipsists who are so convinced the universe emanates from them that they feel no need of a word to designate such a condition. Fish, on the same principle, know nothing of water and for aqueous terminology you should not apply to a fish.

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If on the other hand your ears are assaulted by its impacted sibilants (as the ears of Tennyson were aggrieved by the word "scissors") then I can only fetch you the cold comfort that for a graceless condition the wisdom inherent in the language has afforded us a graceless word. And if, finally, your grievance is that Bill uses it too often, then I can only tax you with inconsistency, since you report that after one to two years of not hearing it from his lips you were wounded anew by a single occurrence—perhaps, I will grant, on the principle of a man who has been sensitized to penicillin. Such a man's comfort should be that others need the remedy that inflames him, and that principle I commend to you.

Hugh Kenner

Some years ago I felt a lessening in his concerns for me and for my world, his interventions in it having reduced sharply. Our exchanges dwindled, and there came a total end to his long, disquisitional letters about this and that. I felt the possibility of Alzheimer's lurking in that special mind. But he never forgot to remind me of the anniversary of his wedding, in which I had served as best man. And he nursed something of a fixation on National Review Online's posting of the word-of-the-day. If that day's word was missing, he would complain to me. The letter might be only a sentence long. Always he closed his letters, as he had done for forty years, "Ever affectionately." I would always reply in equivalent language, while knowing that this remarkable intellect, and friend, was slipping away, as he did on my 78th birthday, in the arms of his beloved wife.

—WFB

notes & asides

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Having read David D. Ansel's letter to you in NR (Sept. 29), I'd like to offer a solution.

Like Mr. Ansel, I have reasoned that "lady" and "gentleman" were parallel terms and that calling a colleague "gentlelady" was like saying "gentle gentleman." So, for many years, I've referred to women in Congress as "the gentlewoman. . ."

The more similar terms "gentleman" and "gentlewoman," to me, also rest easier on the ears. And—what's more—I've never had a female member question my terminology, though I was prepared to defend it!

Sincerely,
Rep. Lamar Smith [R., Tex.]
Washington, D.C.

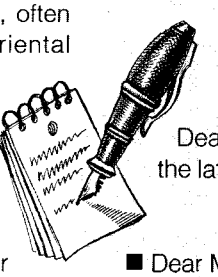
■ Dear Mr. Buckley: In your answer to Mr. Ansel's query regarding proper usage of "lady" versus "gentlelady," you state that one of the consequences of the women's movement is that "lady" is now considered a condescending term. I absolutely agree with you and have, in fact, found in my personal experience that some females (certainly not all by a long shot) can react quite negatively when being addressed in such a way.

The question for me isn't that "lady" has been deemed condescending by the politically correct powers-that-be, but rather *why* that is considered so. I have yet to hear a reasonable explanation as to what it is that makes the term "lady" so offensive to so many. Incidentally, I am just as confounded by the current offense taken by some to the term "Oriental." Can you help enlighten me?

Sincerely,
Greg Crosby
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Dear Mr. Crosby: Well, yes. The term is thought condescending not for etymological reasons but because it is thought artificial and its use self-conscious. There is obviously no objective reason to cavil at that word, no more, Oriental. But the use of the latter for descriptive purposes, often unfriendly ("he gave an oriental smile"), rather than for purposes purely classificatory had to be why its use became widely resented.

Cordially, WFB



■ Dear Mr. Buckley: In your obituary about virtuoso pianist Rosalyn Tureck (August 11), you told of her refusal to shake hands at a reception in her honor. This brought back a memory involving another figure of great accomplishment—Jack Nicklaus.

He's one of my sports heroes, and I observed him closely from the gallery at a charity golf tournament. On a designated tee, there were VIPs lined up to shake hands with the participating PGA stars. When it came Nicklaus's turn to shake hands, he refused, and instead placed his hand on their shoulders in greeting. I wondered why he did this. Was it because his hand was injured? Not likely; he was playing too well for that. Then it dawned on me: He was saving his finely-calibrated grip pressure for his golf clubs, not wanting a firm handshake to knock it out of whack.

Which prompts my question: Was your friend, the virtuoso pianist, indulging in, as you put it, "personal drama" by refusing to shake hands? Or was she humbly preserving her tools of the trade, similar to that virtuoso golfer?

Yours truly,
Peter Kent Riedesel
Plymouth, Minn.

Dear Mr. Riedesel: Let's assume the latter.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Keep in mind for 2004: You may not shout "Morality" in a crowded Democratic convention. In the resulting stampede for the exits, many would be killed.

Sincerely yours,
Dale Boroviak
Lansing, Ill.

—WFB

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Recep Tayyip Erdogan

■ AT WAR ■

Turkey as Target

The war finds a new theater

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

FOUR bombs in Istanbul have recently killed over 60 people, wounding more than 700. The targets were a well-known bank, the British consulate, and two synagogues, and somebody chose them carefully as coded attacks on Western capitalism and imperialism, on Christians and Jews, and never mind that the huge majority of the victims would be Muslims. The Turkish police have arrested suspects who seem to bear the al-Qaeda hallmark, and Syria (of all countries) has handed over 22 Islamists who fled across the border immediately after the bombings.

Turkey is crucial in the war against terror. Its importance as a Muslim country can hardly be exaggerated, whether seen in the perspective of history or current politics. As a member of NATO, Turkey proved a stalwart ally in the Cold War. For years, it has been imploring the European Union for admission, in the face of steady rebuff from the likes of former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, author of the draft constitution of Europe. The club, he and other Euro-grandees declare with a curl of the lip, is not open to Muslims. The more the Turks are excluded, the harder they try to join. Turkey also has accords with the United States and Israel covering a range of issues, from trade to military training. The use of Turkish bases and facilities has contributed to the American stabilization of the whole Middle East. Crouching in Afghan caves, the al-Qaeda crowd must be driven frantic by this example of Muslims so determined to be like other people. Blow things up, then, and bring them to their Islamist duty before it's too late.

In the days of the Ottoman empire, the reigning sultan was also the caliph, to whom all Muslims theoretically owed allegiance. On the throne once held by the King of Kings, the shah of Iran took exception. Ceaseless warfare between Ottoman Turkey and Iran weakened these great Muslim empires, and opened the way irrevocably to the supremacy of Western powers. As a result of the First War, the Allies occupied both countries and might have put an end to their independence. Two soldiers and adventurers, Mustafa Kemal, otherwise Ataturk, and Reza Shah Pahlavi, seized power in Turkey and Iran respectively, and saved them. Both concluded that Islam was a source of weakness and backwardness that had to be overcome, if necessary by violence on the largest scale. Ataturk abolished the caliphate and sharia law, prohibited the veil for women, knocked down mosques, and physically assaulted mullahs. He indoctrinated the army to be the guardians of his modernizing doctrine. Reza Shah Pahlavi was equally brusque. Both men were reinventing national identities.

The question ever since has been, would enforced modernization of this sort work out in practice? Seizing power in Iran in 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini reverted to past identity by imposing his version of an idealized Islamic state in Iran. In Turkey elections and military coups have alternated. As late as 1961, the army was hanging a prime minister in public. And once the ayatollahs got into their stride in Iran, fashionable Islamism started to catch on in Turkey. In the countryside, women wore Islamic headdress again. Terrorist groups sprang up; some of them against the Shia and Sufi minorities, others Kurdish separatists who in a long guerrilla campaign were responsible for the deaths of as many as 30,000 people. Turkish Hezbollah, a particularly vicious group responsible for hundreds

ROMAN GENN

Mr. Pryce-Jones is an NR senior editor. His book *The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs* was recently reissued.

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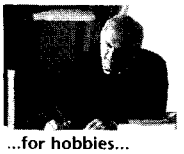

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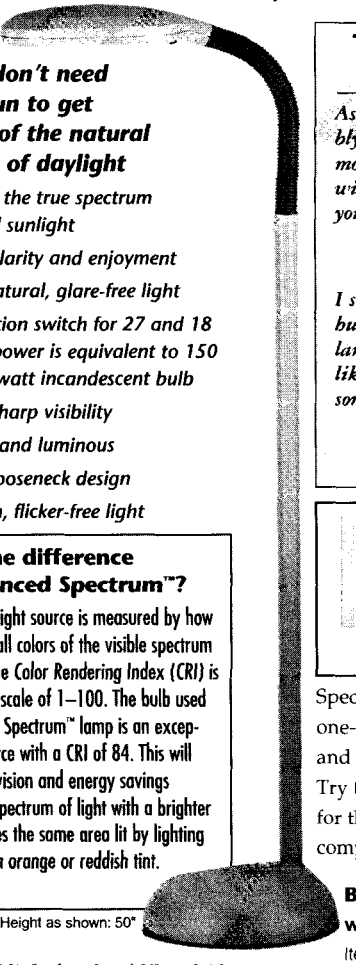

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of deaths, is sponsored by Iran, though alleged to have been infiltrated by Turkish security services as well. Mehmet Agca, who shot Pope John Paul II in 1981, emerged from this underworld of power-plays and gangsterism infused with religious and ethnic frenzy. The Refah, or Welfare, party, under its leader Necmettin Erbakan, successfully made political capital out of Islam.

In 1996 Erbakan became prime minister, and it seemed that the center might well not hold, and Turkey would go the way of Iran. A year later, the army threw him out and dissolved his party. Almost immediately, though, it metamorphosed into the Justice and Development Party, known by its Turkish initials AKP. Its new leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, had been an energetic mayor of Istanbul and also made the best of his Muslim credentials. In one of his speeches, he quoted a line from one of Turkey's most famous nationalist poets, "Minarets are a bayonet, domes helmets," and this was interpreted as an Islamist threat. He served a prison sentence accordingly.

In November 2002, Erdogan and the AKP won a general election with a wide plurality. Could a party mobilizing on an openly Muslim platform really be trusted to continue Ataturk's legacy in the current anti-Western and Islamist climate? Wasn't Erdogan likely to cozy up to other Islamists like the ayatollahs in Tehran or even Osama bin Laden? The army exercises control through the so-called National Security Council, a body with contested constitutional legitimacy. Wouldn't the AKP and the NSC soon be squaring off in yet another round of the secular-versus-Islamist violence that has disfigured Turkish politics? Observers inside and outside Turkey feared the worst.

It didn't happen. Osama bin Laden likes to lament Ataturk's achievements of 80 years ago, and speaks about restoring the defunct caliphate, but Erdogan has no time for this, arguing that Turkey will be something unique, a Western and democratic country and an Islamic one as well. He imagines a comparison between Islamic democrats and the Christian Democrats in Europe. In his eyes, membership in the EU would consummate acceptance of Turkey's proper place among nations. He has also maintained the accords with the United States and Israel. True, in March, Turkish public opinion overwhelmingly supported Saddam Hussein. The Turkish parliament refused to allow American forces to enter Iraq from Turkish territory, thus helping to create today's insecurity, but Erdogan has been unmistakably eager to mend fences, and rebut anti-Americanism. The subsequent Turkish offer to deploy peacekeeping forces in Iraq was not accepted only for fear of alienating the Kurds.

Osama bin Laden speaks about restoring the defunct caliphate, but Erdogan has no time for this, arguing that Turkey will be something unique.

"I do not accept messages given through terror. I take it under my feet," were the stylish words with which Erdogan waved away the recent bombings. Terror will hurt, however. Turkey has a total foreign debt of over $50 billion. Tourism, one of the largest sources of revenue, is bound to suffer. For the time being, Turks seem to share Erdogan's mood of anger against terror, tempered by resignation. What will al-Qaeda or other Islamist groups do next? Their strategy evidently is to extend their cause in those Muslim countries whose politics threaten the fantasy of the restored caliphate—Indonesia, Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and now Turkey. It looks as if Islamists are able only to mount particular coups against selected targets—in other words, to make a show of strength from a position of essential weakness. Repeated bombings, the opening of some sustained campaign, however, would invite the NSC and the military to act for fear that Islamist radicalization would catch on with a demoralized population. Even in the absence of a coup, the army could prove that Erdogan's conception of an Islamic democracy also has elements of fantasy, at least for the time being. The war on terror has come **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY**

A Sense of Entitlement

Medicare's new expansion, and what to think

GRACE-MARIE TURNER

THE recently enacted Medicare bill is being fiercely criticized from both the right and the left, but planted in this huge, and hugely expensive, legislation are seeds that can lead to transformative changes in the health sector.

Liberals are angry because the bill puts an end to their nearly 40 years of dominance over the program and injects some market competition into a system many of them still hope to use as a springboard for universal, single-payer government health insurance. And many conservatives are angry because they believe that a Republican Congress and White House have abandoned small-government principles to create a massive new entitlement projected to cost more than $400 billion in the first ten years and burden future generations with trillions of dollars in unfunded liabilities. They also feel *cheated*, because the plan to put Medicare on a track toward competing with private plans was reduced to six demonstration projects—*starting in 2010.*

Nonetheless, Congress narrowly passed the legislation, and President Bush is expected to sign it soon. The clincher that led to enactment was endorsement by the AARP, the 35-million-strong seniors lobby. The price of AARP's support was to scale back measures leading to competition with private plans. Chief GOP negotiator Bill Thomas, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, stormed out of an eleventh-hour session when told of the

Grace-Marie Turner is president of the Galen Institute in Alexandria, Va.

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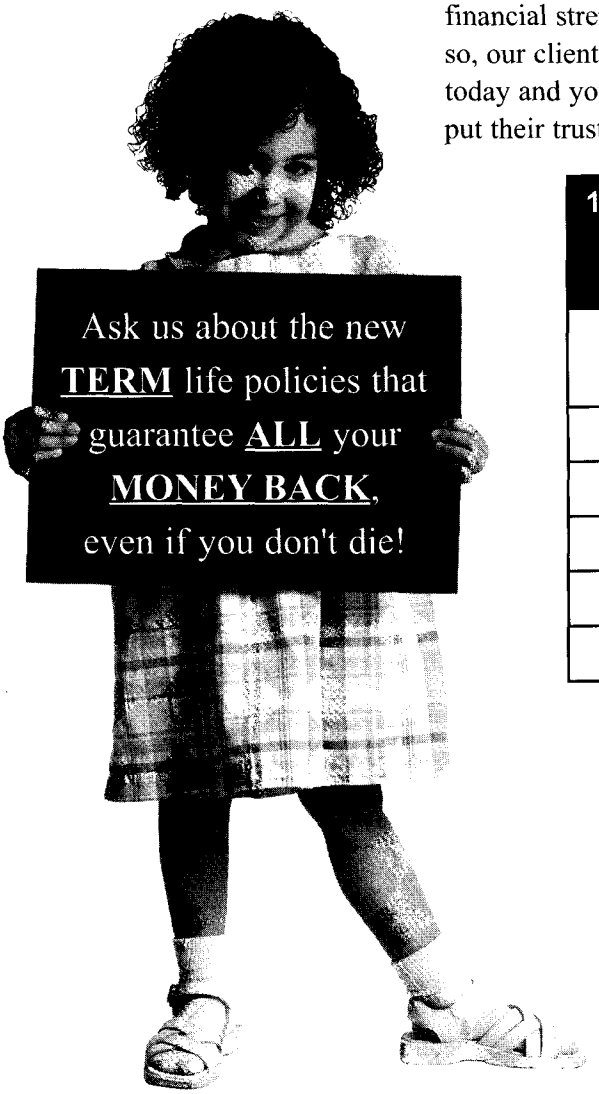

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deal, only to be coaxed back to fix and polish it.

For six long years, Congress had been debating how to add an outpatient-prescription-drug benefit to Medicare. The bill as finally enacted offers a benefit design that will be the subject of intense argument for years to come. Congress could have reduced the cost by making the benefit available primarily to the 22 percent of seniors who don't have drug coverage, but congressional leaders were determined to pass a drug benefit that was available to all. So, starting in 2006, all 40 million Medicare beneficiaries will be able to get a voluntary prescription benefit, delivered through private drug plans; the plans will be paid partly through government payments and partly by premiums from seniors, estimated at about $35 a month. Once enrolled, seniors will pay the first $250 each year in drug costs, and the drug plans will cover 75 percent of the next $2,000 in drug spending. Then, there is an infamous "doughnut hole" requiring seniors to pay *all* of their next $2,850 in drug costs before the coverage triggers again, when it will pay 95 percent once seniors' total drug costs reach $5,100. Lower-income seniors receive more generous subsidies, including reduced premiums, deductibles, and drug co-payments. Many observers are concerned that only seniors with high or moderately high drug expenses will enroll in the drug plans, leading to higher premiums for everyone.

But the legislation also contains important victories for reform—including Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and incentives for private health plans to stay in Medicare, providing a base of participation for future modernization. HSAs have the potential to transform health-insurance arrangements for all Americans, including future retirees. Granted, the reform proposals came at a high price, but the reforms probably never would have been passed had they not been part of a larger bill.

HSAs build on Archer Medical Savings Accounts with a much more accessible system. Starting next year, 250 million Americans under age 65 will be able to make tax-free deposits to their own health accounts. Individuals will be able to deposit up to $2,600, and families $5,150, next year to pay for routine health expenses and to save for future medical needs; allowable deposits will be adjusted for inflation every year after that. Whatever isn't spent in one year rolls over to the next. The money stays tax-free as long as it is spent on IRS-allowable health care, and the interest that accrues on it is tax-free as well. The accounts must be coupled with high-deductible health insurance that covers major health expenses.

The average cost of an employer-provided family insurance policy is more than $9,000; HSAs give employers more options in allocating the money. The new system also gives consumers an incentive to seek the best value for their dollars—and can thus set in motion the essential change of putting doctors and patients back in control of medical decisions. Some forward-looking physicians already are starting to see the value of these new arrangements, with a few forgoing insurance altogether and offering their services for cash payments at fixed, posted prices.

For conservatives, there is much to like in the 2003 Medicare bill. The legislation is an important starting point for reform.

The link between consumers and sellers has been broken in the health sector because third-party payment systems have led consumers to believe that someone else is paying the bill for their medical expenses. Federal, state, and local programs pay 45 percent of all health bills, largely through price-controlled programs like Medicare and Medicaid. And much of the remaining 55 percent is paid through private insurance that is circumscribed by rules set by government and by corporate bureaucracies. Health-insurance prices continue to rise at double-digit rates year after year while consumers complain about a lack of control over decisions.

Keeping private health plans in the program is essential if there is to be a base to create, eventually, a competitive Medicare. The incentives established by the new bill will encourage many more private health plans to participate in the Medicare market. In 2006, when the drug benefit kicks in, there will be a solid base of millions of seniors who will be able to choose from among competing private health plans offering an integrated drug benefit. In addition, the plans will have some flexibility in the design of the drug benefit, to make it more consumer-friendly.

Medicare-endorsed prescription-drug discount cards also will be available to all beneficiaries starting next spring, giving seniors access to privately negotiated drug discounts that the Bush administration estimates will provide savings of 15 to 25 percent on prescription drugs. Lower-income seniors will receive a temporary subsidy on the drug discount card of up to $600 in 2004 and 2005; this is a defined contribution that gives government certainty over its costs and seniors an incentive to make the dollars go as far as possible, putting down a good marker for future programs.

For conservatives, then, there is much to like in this bill. But liberals are getting ready for the next round. Senate minority leader Tom Daschle has introduced legislation to repeal what he considers to be the worst provisions of the legislation. Topping the list will be filling the "doughnut hole," repealing the six demonstration projects, allowing Americans to import price-controlled drugs from Canada and Europe, and insisting that the federal government use its bulk-purchasing power to "negotiate" lower drug prices. But that's tomorrow's fight. As it stands, the 2003 Medicare bill is an important starting point for reform. It cracks the door by engaging consumers and competition in a sector of the economy dominated by government-fixed prices and bureaucratic control. The challenge for lawmakers will be to build on these reforms, not revert to greater political control over the health-care economy. **NR**

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■ THE HOME FRONT

Get Your War Bonds!

Why doesn't the administration shout it?

JOHN J. MILLER

THE United States wasn't at war when Irving Berlin composed a bouncy little tune called "Any Bonds Today?" But he knew war was coming, as the Nazis trampled the people of Europe:

> They fell ev'ry one
> At the point of a gun—
> America mustn't be next . . .
> Buy a share of freedom today.

Berlin's song was part of a broad public effort, launched in the spring of 1941, urging Americans to buy defense bonds. Before the year was out, of course, the Treasury Department had a new name for these shares of freedom: war bonds. By 1946, Americans had bought more than $185 billion of them, well over $1 trillion in today's dollars.

They helped win the Second World War, in that they financed American involvement and rallied the nation behind an important cause. But there hasn't been a war-bond drive since—not in Korea, Vietnam, or the Persian Gulf. In the current war, the Bush administration could stand to come up with ways to revive the "we're all in this together" spirit. A new war-bond drive may be just the thing.

That's actually what Republican senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky thought right after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. On September 14, he introduced legislation directing the Treasury Department to start a new war-bond program. "By investing in a U.S. war bond," said McConnell, "patriotic citizens will have an opportunity to make a direct contribution to the war against the scourge of terrorism and provide much-needed resources for the effort to rescue the injured, rebuild the broken, and retaliate against the enemy."

It seemed to make good sense—but the

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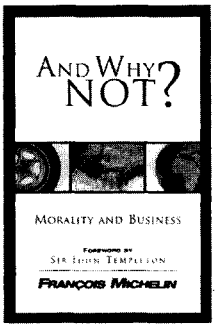

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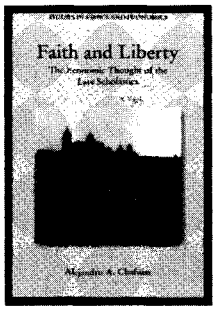

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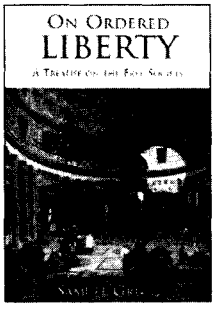

ON ORDERED LIBERTY
By Samuel Gregg
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White House wasn't happy. Encouraging the public to buy war bonds conflicted with the Bush administration's goal of revving the economy with consumer spending. Officials didn't openly criticize McConnell's war-bond bill, but they tried to bury it with faint praise. The idea caught on anyway. Congress passed McConnell's measure and the Treasury Department announced that one of its most popular series of savings bonds would bear the name "patriot bonds."

To dub these items "patriot bonds" instead of "war bonds" was the first step in a strategy whose goal was to downplay the bonds as much as possible. It could have been worse: Democratic senator Tim Johnson of South Dakota had proposed the weak sister "unity bonds." Still, the term "patriot bond" does little to remind the public that there's a war to be won. This is doubly true when the government refuses to urge that Americans buy the bonds. Most people don't even know they exist.

This certainly wasn't the case 60 years ago, when the importance of buying war bonds was the object of a massive public-relations campaign. Celebrities from Fred Astaire to Lucille Ball volunteered their time. Carole Lombard died in a plane crash after attending a promotional event. Libertyville, Ill., earned its 15 minutes of fame for buying more war bonds per capita than any other town in America. Libertyville owed much of its success to *Desperate Journey*, a war movie starring Errol Flynn and Ronald Reagan. When the film premiered at a local theater, opening-night tickets required the purchase of a $25 war bond. Nationwide, kids were deeply involved as well, through the Boy Scouts and the Bugs Bunny Bond Rally.

A huge bond drive was a practical necessity during World War II. The war bonds weren't really earmarked for military expenses; they went into the federal government's general fund, just as patriot bonds do today. But money is fungible, and people understood they were making it possible for the United States to build tanks, bombers, and battleships. In an economy of full employment and scarce goods, bond buying also fought inflation. And bond drives put dead capital to work. Following the Great Depression, Americans were leery of placing their money in the stock market—many were more inclined to stuff their cash under mattresses. Bond drives helped change these unproductive habits for the better.

From an economic standpoint, war bonds are unnecessary today. The war on terrorism can be financed without special drives. Also, investors are more sophisticated than ever, which means that many of them may conclude that bonds don't make sense for them. During the Second World War, marketing research showed that people were willing to buy war bonds because they knew they would get something from their investment later on. Nonetheless, bonds make sense for many people today, especially for those with established incomes looking for secure ways to save money for the education of their children or their own retirement.

Moreover, war bonds must be understood as more than financial instruments—

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they're tools for building public support for the war effort. FDR's government understood this central function early on. Even before the first war-bond drive, a memo to Treasury secretary Henry Morgenthau noted that a special savings bond for small investors would "give to the American people a sense of the magnitude and importance of the national defense effort" and "do so by transforming people from being mere observers into becoming active participants in this effort."

It turns out that these are two of the biggest problems facing the Bush administration right now: convincing the public that the war on terrorism is urgent and giving those who aren't in uniform a positive way to participate. War bonds would give Americans a way to invest themselves in the mission—and the ownership of bonds would bind them to the struggle.

A war-bond drive also would pose a direct challenge to the anti-war Left. As Lawrence R. Samuel points out in his book *Pledging Allegiance*, bond drives were a means of blunting "potentially oppositional groups such as labor and African Americans" during the Second World War. At a time when Gunnar Myrdal was defining race relations as "the American dilemma," many blacks viewed the purchase of war bonds as their patriotic duty. Duke Ellington, Joe Louis, and the NAACP all pitched in. Morgenthau even asked Cab Calloway—of "heidi, heidi, heidi hi" fame—to compose a war-bond song in "jive."

Don't count on Bush to call on Snoop Dogg to record a rap endorsing the war on terrorism. No bond drive today can possibly duplicate the success of the one from the Second World War. If nothing else, celebrity culture is much different and certainly less inclined to support a GOP administration in what has become an increasingly partisan war effort. At the very least, however, a war-bond drive would put the Left on the defensive by making it bicker about the merits of something ordinary Americans won't find the least bit controversial.

But before that can happen, the White House must decide to go on the offensive. It wasted a good opportunity two years ago, when the patriot bonds began. (At the time, bond buying actually surged, though this had much more to do with favorable market conditions than with any publicity the Treasury Department generated.) The administration remains just as reluctant today, even though the president has said, "I assure you that our government at every level is responding to this [terrorist] threat."

So why not at the level of the Treasury? "We don't have the money for a big campaign, and if Congress offered to appropriate it, we'd tell them we don't want it," says Pete Hollenbach of the Bureau of Public Debt, an agency within Treasury. "Our goal is to finance the public debt at the lowest cost over time." That's a worthy mission—but perhaps too small for a country at war. And we are at war, aren't we? **NR**

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■ CULTURE WATCH

PETA vs. KFC

A dirty war against the Colonel

JAY NORDLINGER

EATEN at KFC lately? Well, shame on you—at least that's what PETA would say. PETA, of course, is People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, the most notorious and influential animal-rights group in the country. And KFC is the chain once known, more amply, as Kentucky Fried Chicken. PETA has been on a fierce campaign against KFC, charging that the company treats chickens inhumanely, or at least allows its suppliers to. KFC, naturally, denies the charge. Who's right? And what is a fan of the Colonel, who is nevertheless a foe of animal abuse, to do?

Start with the fact that PETA does not, or should not, inspire trust in normal people. Despite its beautiful name—who can be against the "ethical treatment of animals"?—PETA is an extremist group. They hold that meat-eating is "Holocaust on Your Plate." Sharks that maim and kill people have exacted "revenge." School lunches are "weapons of mass destruction"—that sort of thing.

More damnably, the group has clear ties to terrorism: For example, it has donated to the Earth Liberation Front, which is number one on the FBI's domestic-terror list. In truth, PETA may, in its heart of hearts, see itself as somewhat soft: Ingrid Newkirk, the group's flamboyant and endlessly energetic president, has said, "If I had more guts, I'd light a match"—to research laboratories. And a statement by PETA's Bruce Friedrich is often cited by people who worry that the extent of PETA's radicalism is little known. Before a convention audience, he celebrated "blowing stuff up and smashing windows" and declared, "It would be great if all the fast-food outlets, slaughterhouses, these laboratories, and the banks who fund them exploded tomorrow. . . . Hallelujah to the people who are willing to do that!"

So, this is not a nice lil' anti-cruelty group. Violence aside, their aim is "total animal liberation," which is to say, no meat, no milk, no anything. They're against seeing-eye dogs for the blind, any and all medical research involving animals—the works. They can hardly serve as champions of those who want simply that their meat be raised and killed humanely.

But PETA has scored inarguable successes. It campaigned against McDonald's, Burger King, and Wendy's, and ceased those campaigns when the

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companies undertook animal-welfare reforms. (The companies denied that the changes had anything to do with activist pressure, but then they probably would, wouldn't they?) PETA next turned its sights on KFC. Now, poor KFC gets its chickens from the same places everyone else does—Tyson's, Perdue, and the handful of other suppliers in this country. But KFC is a big name, and a big chain, so PETA went after the Colonel—the Colonel of Cruelty, they call him.

They put up a website, KentuckyFriedCruelty.com, which is a model of invective, camp, and gonzo aggression. PETA depicts the Colonel—kindly old Harlan Sanders—as a chicken-torturing maniac, complete with dripping knife. The first step in his "secret recipe" is, "Starve the parent birds constantly . . ." And you should check out the Kids' Corner, which, like the knife, features dripping blood. "Chickens should be friends, not food!" PETA admonishes. The sermon concludes, "The best way to make sure that animals don't suffer is to stop eating them!"

And there's the rub I mentioned: In the PETA view, the basic cruelty is the use of animals for food at all. These activists communicate a mixed message, as when they stand in front of KFC outlets holding banners that say "Go Vegan!" This must not cut much ice with those who, no matter what their concern for animal rights, aren't goin' vegan. And does Bruce Friedrich lose some effectiveness when, in letters to KFC urging more humane practices, he identifies himself as PETA's "Vegan Campaign Coordinator"? KFC can say—and does say—quite persuasively, *Don't listen to these kooks. Their real aim is that you don't eat any chicken at all—or drink milk or own a cat. Come on!*

PETA has been pulling anti-KFC stunts all over the country—nay, the world. In Paris, they had a "demo"—their word, a typical radical's word—in which they smeared fake blood and scared away customers. ("The protest blocked traffic on the busy Boulevard Sébastopol for more than two hours!") In Germany, an activist daubed the CEO of KFC's parent company with blood and feathers, causing Friedrich to remark, in characteristic fashion, "There is so much blood on this chicken-killer's hands, a little more on his business suit won't hurt."

PETA has enlisted a number of celebrities in its war against KFC, most prominently Pamela Anderson, the ex-*Baywatch* babe. She has done a provocative poster for the group, and has furnished—or so we're asked to believe—"Pamela's Festive Favorites," which are "animal-free" recipes (e.g., Best-Ever Green Bean Bake). And PETA put the arm on actor Jason Alexander, who was KFC's ad spokesman: They threatened to picket the show he was doing in L.A. (*The Producers*). He and KFC parted company, for reasons that are contested. What is not contested is that it's not good to cross PETA, unless you want a world of grief, unrelentingly.

The group campaigns with the zeal—and bullying passion—of fanatics. They harass KFC officials at home and at church (yes). They knock on neighbors' doors, imploring these folk to lobby the officials. At first, KFC tried cooperating with PETA, listening to its appeals and discussing reforms. But at some point, apparently, it determined that PETA is unappeasable.

In getting to the nitty-gritty, let's stipulate that chicken-raising and -killing is a dirty, unpretty business. It's almost a cliché to say that, if you've ever been on a chicken farm, you don't ever want to eat a chicken. PETA circulates a film of abuses at a chicken plant, and the film is virtually impossible to watch. KFC says that it is misleading, as the practices depicted are either obsolete or aberrant. Whom to believe? In many of these disputes, it comes down to he said, she said—and what common sense and intuition tell us. KFC has formed an "animal-welfare advisory panel," which sounds encouraging. PETA charges that the panel is a) stacked with corporate stooges and b) disregarded by the company anyway.

PETA says that its demands are relatively modest: that suppliers replace "electrical stunning and throat slicing" with "gas killing." (Talk about "Holocaust on Your Plate," but never mind.) That they institute "humane, mechanized chicken gathering," as opposed to "manual methods," which—contrary to what you might suppose—subject chickens to more injuries. That suppliers "stop forcing rapid growth" and adopt as their primary concern the health of the chicken.

KFC's defenders say that some of PETA's demands are impossible, and meant to be impossible. And it would, indeed, seem too much to ask that suppliers breed "leaner, stronger" chickens, as PETA insists—restaurants, and customers, want their birds plump and juicy, unalterably. But some of the demands seem quite reasonable. When PETA is in

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The Fence

Will the Fence calm the region or exacerbate the conflict?

After more than three years of the intifada, Israel has decided to build a protective fence that would separate "Israel proper" from the "West Bank" and protect its citizens from murderous assaults which so far have caused over 1,000 Jewish deaths.

What are the facts?

A nation at war. Israel is at war—a war imposed on it by its mortal enemies. The Arabs are prepared to do anything at all, including their individual or collective self-immolation to attain their murderous ends. During the last three years, during their so-called Al Aksa intifada, scores of young Palestinians have blown themselves up in order to take as many of the hated Jews as possible with them. They have been most "successful" in that grisly endeavor.

Israel has refrained from inflicting serious punishment on its tormentors. Clearly, Israel's military might would enable it to destroy its enemies quickly, but decency and respect for human life keep it from that. Instead, Israel decided to build a protective Fence, the course of which essentially follows the "green line," the armistice line from the 1948 War of Liberation. The only purpose of the Fence is to keep suicide bombers out of "Israel proper" and to seal it off from Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"). The Fence causes inconvenience and hardship for the Arabs. Before the intifada, up to 200,000 of them went daily to their jobs in Israel. Now, that source of income is cut off. More than 50 per cent of its employable men are out of work and unable to feed their families.

> "The corollary of the wise saying that good fences make good neighbors is that bad neighbors require good fences."

The one person guilty of having brought this suffering, this misery on his people is Yasser Arafat, the president of the so-called "Palestinian Authority." World opinion and even our own government prevent Israel from touching this archvillain and from bringing him to justice.

Some misconceptions. It is not clear why so many are opposed to Israel's protective Fence. The radical left is protesting it in noisy rallies all over the world. Some call it a "wall," bringing up odious images of the wall erected by the Soviet Union to prevent mass flights to the West. But the Israeli Fence is not that. Only less than four miles out of the eighty-three miles that have been built so far actually constitute a wall, rather than a fence. The walled portions were built in areas where sniper incidents have occurred.

Another misconception about the Fence is that it intrudes on "Palestinian land." It is true that the Fence—the portions that are now built and the portions that are still to be built—extends in some localities across the "green line." That is only in order to include that small part of the "West Bank" in which about 75 per cent of Israelis beyond the "green line" now live. Some people are in uproar because they argue that Israel has de facto annexed "Palestinian land." But that is nonsense, of course. There is no "Palestinian land." It is only the constant repetition that makes people believe that the "West Bank" belongs to the "Palestinians." Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") is part of the Jewish homeland. Any land that Israel might eventually yield to the Arabs to establish some kind of autonomy would be an act of generosity and accommodation unprecedented in world history.

Israel has tremendous expenses for its educational and social needs. No Israeli decision maker would waste money on a fence if the constant atrocity attacks had not made it imperative. If attacks were to stop, the Fence project could be immediately halted. Those who oppose the Fence and refer to it as an "apartheid wall" either do not understand the horror that suicide terrorists inflict on Israel's civilian population or they do not wish Israel well. But if the Arabs would abandon their obsession to obliterate the Jewish state, and once they demonstrated that they truly wished to live in peace with Israel and participate in its prosperity and booming economy, the Fence could be torn down in no time at all. But that happy day seems far away.

What is wrong with a fence? We have a 70-mile-long fence—ultimately to be lengthened to 330 miles—snaking along the Mexican border. Its purpose is not to keep murderous intruders at bay, but to prevent people looking for work from entering our country. How can we then ask the Israelis not to build a fence to protect the lives of their citizens? The Gaza Strip is and has been for years surrounded by such a fence. Not a single suicide attacker has ever been able to cross into Israel from Gaza, while, with devastating "success," hundreds have been able to cross the open border of the "West Bank." And then there was the "good fence" between Lebanon and Israel, which for many years Lebanese workers could daily cross into Israel and earn their livelihood. The corollary of the wise saying that good fences make good neighbors is that bad neighbors require good fences. And surely, the Arab terrorists are the very worst neighbors that could happen to Israel.

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moderate mode, it comes off as . . . well, non-crazy, and just. Why not "mechanized gathering" instead of the manual variety, particularly in an ever-mechanizing world? And why not "gas killing," as a gentler alternative to the other stuff? KFC itself says that it is looking into the feasibility of such a change.

I should note that the company does little to defend itself, and to help those who would be its friends. If you're a journalist—even from a conservative opinion magazine!—they won't talk to you. They will only fax you a two-sentence statement from a spokeswoman saying, in essence, *Don't worry, be happy!* KFC might show a little more self-confidence, and engage with its critics, when those critics seem engageable (i.e., non-crazy). In July, PETA sued KFC for making false statements in its communications to the public. In September, it dropped the suit—because KFC dramatically altered its line. This was a black eye for the company, and a rather startling victory for PETA.

There are countless details in this case, and many twists and turns to the story. I will boil down for you, if you like, what I have concluded about KFC and PETA after disinterested investigation: PETA is a radical group, maybe even a dangerous one, and its claims should be regarded with skepticism. But just because it says something, doesn't mean it's not true. KFC, like most companies, blows a little corporate smoke. Its interest is the bottom line, not the well-being of chickens. But it is far from a nefarious company; it's just another chicken buyer. PETA may force the more humane treatment of chickens, which would be splendid. But the business of serving chicken, and other meats, to many millions of customers will always be a little dirty, something from which sensitive people rather turn away, even as they tolerate it, and benefit from it.

The PETA president, Ingrid Newkirk, has talked of finding Colonel Sanders's grave and dancing on it. Her group has promised that the company is "in for a long battle." If the company has a case to make—and it does—it ought to fight back, and hard. For its foe is formidable, and well-wishers of both KFC and animals could use a little, honest reassurance. **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH II**

Our Great, Societal Neverland

Responsibility for pedophilia, both individual and collective

THEODORE DALRYMPLE

EVERY age has its favorite crime, the crime it loves to hate and that sends a delightful shiver of disgust down its spine. Once it was the white slave trade; now it is pedophilia. That is why the Michael Jackson case will capture the attention of the whole world, while matters of much greater intrinsic moment are neglected. Here is where celebrity culture will meet moral indignation: Could the viewer at home ask for anything more?

Every man is innocent until proven guilty, of course, but if the O. J. Simpson trial is anything to go by, proof will have very little to do with Jackson's trial. It will be more a battle of prejudices than an inquiry into what actually happened; and the lawyer who appeals more successfully to the emotions of the jurors will win. The majesty of the law will bow to the necessity for the show to go on.

No one who so much as glances at a photograph of Michael Jackson could doubt that he is a very peculiar person. The plastic surgeons have done to his face what syphilis and arteriosclerosis did to another icon of his age, Lenin. Jackson is a man who believes (and has been led by flatterers and sycophants to believe) that fame and fortune render his whim sovereign over nature, social convention, and perhaps even the law. If one's appearance and race are matters of choice, to be altered at will, why should sexual conduct not also be a matter of choice? To the shallow egotist, the world is an existential supermarket, where the consumer is king and the fulfillment of whim is the sole purpose of life.

This doesn't by itself make Jackson guilty, of course: the evidence must be heard and weighed. But a world in which individual choice is valued very much higher than obedience to social convention should not be very surprised when the law is flouted. Nevertheless, we should keep a sense of proportion, and remember that pedophilia is not one thing and one thing alone. It ranges from the pathetic and the relatively trivial to the truly terrible.

At the age of about eight, for example, I myself was the "victim" of a pedophile. He was a dirty old man in a public park where I used to play; he asked me and my friends to masturbate him (not that we knew the word, or even what kind of pleasure he derived from his strange request). I told my mother what had happened, much as I would have told her about anything else unusual that had happened, and she called the police. My main recollection of the event was my extreme pride when a policeman came with his notebook, and stood at the end of my bed before I went to sleep, writing down what I said. I had never been so important before, and certainly have never felt so important since. I don't think the episode ruined my life.

I meet a number of pedophiles in the prison in which I work. Some of them are of subnormal intelligence, who might once have been cared for in institutions but who now, in the name of individual autonomy, are expected to make their way in the world more or less on their own. Their sexual approaches to children are usually fumbling and tentative, though persistent. I recall one in particular who was deaf and dumb into the bargain, cut off from almost all human companionship: and it is surely reasonable to ask what kind of society would allow such a person to fend for himself.

At the other end of the scale, I have encountered sexual crime so appalling that if I had not seen evidence of it with my own eyes, I should have regarded all reports of it as mere hysteria. For exam-

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ple, the police once brought me videotapes of a couple who sexually tortured their own daughters for years on end, suspending them naked by pulleys from the ceiling and raping them repeatedly. They did this both for pleasure and profit, selling the recordings of their activities down the Internet at very high prices. I have also met East Europeans imprisoned for smuggling underage girls from impoverished countries such as Moldavia into Britain, for use as child prostitutes. Whether the demand creates the supply, or the supply the demand, is a complex question. I suspect that the appetite grows with the feeding.

Most of the pedophiles I meet fall somewhere between the two extremes I have described. I do not think they are ill, and there is little evidence that they can be "helped" to overcome their problem. I recall what one sensible psychiatrist said in the trial of Jeffrey Dahmer, the serial killer: He was not responsible for his bizarre sexual orientation, but he was responsible for acting upon it.

When it comes to child sexuality, our society is Janus-faced, to put it mildly. In the first place, the age of consent has been more or less abolished: No one takes it very seriously anymore. And when I meet a man in prison who has been convicted of having had sexual relations with an underage girl, he almost invariably tells me that the girl told her parents or the police only when he decided to break the relationship off. In other words, the complaint was a matter of revenge, not of outraged morals.

Such convictions are very rare by comparison with the number of offenses that are actually committed, which are numerous. Parents frequently connive at what is, in fact, sexual crime, by allowing their children to have sexual relations before the age of consent. Moreover, doctors, at least in Britain, are actually enjoined as a matter of professional ethics not to tell parents when they prescribe contraceptives to their underage daughters. In other words, the medical profession is not merely permitted, but required, to cooperate in what the law regards as sexual crime.

You have only to look in the magazines aimed at eleven- and twelve-year-old girls to see how strongly the sexualization of life is being promoted in our society. (In part, of course, our difficulties come about because physical, though not mental or emotional, maturity occurs ever earlier, by about one year per decade). Furthermore, the very idea of normality is undergoing ideological attack in sexual pedagogy: The idea is promoted that sexual conduct is a matter of individual choice, like religious belief, and that none can be deemed superior to any other.

Having created the social circumstances in which the sexual abuse of children is most likely to occur, we turn on pedophiles as convenient scapegoats.

So why, in societies such as ours which are so unclear and equivocal as to sexual boundaries, does pedophilia cause such outrage? For example, a 73-year-old man in Britain, with a history of relatively minor offenses, has just been brutally beaten to death after many months of persecution by neighbors and townspeople.

Almost certainly, the perpetrators of the murderous attack, and the persecutors of the old man, are the kind of people to have children in the very circumstances in which sexual abuse is most likely to take place. It is a fair bet that they themselves will have been born out of wedlock, and that their children will be born out of wedlock (as 40 percent of children in Britain now are). In the town in which the man was beaten to death, serial step-fatherhood is probably the only kind of fatherhood that is now known. And stepfathers are many times more likely to commit sexual abuse than biological fathers.

Besides, half of the much-reduced number of marriages now end in divorce. Many of the children of these marriages are also subjected to step-fatherhood, with its attendant risks. And in the social milieu in which pedophiles are so reviled, it is commonly the case that mothers will heartlessly and ruthlessly disembarrass themselves of their own children if their new boyfriend objects to their presence in the household. Their sex life is more important to them than the welfare of their own children. Could there be worse indifference to children than this?

In other words, having created the social circumstances in which the sexual abuse of children is most likely to occur, we turn on pedophiles as convenient scapegoats. We don't want to forego our freedoms, even if their exercise is responsible for the morass in which we now find ourselves: We prefer to blame a small and identifiable group of miscreants, drowning out our awareness of our own, larger guilt and responsibility by the strident denunciation of others.

Whether he be innocent or guilty, the trial of Michael Jackson is a natural consequence of a society that draws no boundaries but is hypocritically horrified by results that any reasonably intelligent person might have foretold. He who says single parenthood and easy divorce says child sexual abuse. There is nothing new under the sun, of course: Every kind of sin that we commit, our forefathers committed. The question is whether we have more or less excuse than they, and I say that we have less. **NR**

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■ **COVER STORY**

THE HOT, HOT, HOT CANDIDATE

The anger, popularity, and prospects of Howard Dean

RICHARD LOWRY

Des Moines

HOWARD DEAN is unveiling his early-childhood agenda before a dozen workers in the child-development center at the Des Moines Area Community College. The workers—mostly very sensible-looking older women—sit at tables facing Dean, sporting bright yellow "Child Advocate" stickers and earnestly taking notes. With actor/activist Rob Reiner at his side, Dean touts his "Welcome Baby" and "Dr. Dynasaur" early-childhood initiatives from Vermont, and explains his $110 billion plan for federal funding of similar programs. His audience is respectful, but not over-enthused. It's not until the question-and-answer period that Dean will close the deal, in a fashion utterly typical of his candidacy.

One of the workers raises his hand and says they've heard similar sentiments about the importance of early childhood from other politicians in the past, including Bill Clinton. What makes Dean different? Reiner begins to pipe up, but Dean slyly hushes him by patting his hand. Dean is eager to answer this question himself.

"Look what we've done in Vermont," he says. "Every time I put out the budget, I said to legislators, 'You're gonna support health insurance for kids, you're gonna support early childhood. If you touch one hair on the head of any of those programs, you'll never see another road grader in your district again.'" The audience laughs and applauds at the sheer SOB-ness of it. Dean adds, "My reputation for toughness and bluntness sometimes was justified. I was very tough with the legislature." When someone raises the prospect of Dean's having to work with a Republican Congress to pass his plans, he explains his idea of "working with": "If they don't do any of these things, then the next election in 2006 is gonna be a referendum on the behavior of Congress. It worked very well for Harry Truman."

Dean has won over this small crowd, not composed of partisan firebrands, with his promise to give 'em hell. In *Primary Colors*, the Bill Clinton character performs in a similar setting, wowing an adult-literacy class with a heart-wrenching, fabricated story about his illiterate uncle designed to show Clinton's deep sympathy with the struggles of his audience. Clinton bonded by emoting; Dean bonds by bristling. If Clinton pledged to feel our pain, Dean promises to inflict some—on those alleged malefactors who have seized control of the country so they can neglect children, the environment, and workers, and trample democracy.

Dean has been the Democratic candidate of the moment for some time now. It may be that rather than a flash-in-the-pan, Dean is the presidential candidate who simply best represents the contemporary Democratic party: not just its angry mood, but its principles and priorities. He famously captured the party's wholesale opposition to the Iraq war and its unyielding anti-Bushism sooner than his major rivals. But he also effectively expresses the party's hyper-multilateralist foreign policy and allergy to the use of force, its old-school big-government economics, and its liberalism on cultural issues. Clinton tried, intermittently, to mitigate all these positions and tendencies. Dean represents the return of the repressed—a repressed liberalism that is fed up and not going to take it anymore.

If Dean is the anti-Clinton, as has often been noted, he has parallels with another insurgent presidential candidate, the John McCain of 2000. Both Dean and McCain are tough, blunt-spoken, and anti-corporate, and both pioneered Internet networking and fundraising. Both suffuse their crowds with a sense that politics matters again, and champion a reformist patriotism: McCain wanted to fight special interests to make politics worthy of the country again; Dean wants to "take back the country," to restore its image abroad and vindicate small-d democratic politics. Both have been works in progress, as McCain evolved away

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from his former rock-ribbed conservatism and Dean has shed his relative moderation from Vermont.

There are big differences, of course. Most important, McCain ran against his party's establishment and its base. Dean is running against his party establishment, with the fervent support of its base. This is why he has an excellent chance to win the Democratic nomination, and represents a formidable political force.

A MAN AND HIS PEOPLE

It is impossible to understand Dean without realizing that his supporters sincerely think that Bush has soiled the country. Dean talks of restoring "the honor and dignity of the United States." That's an echo of Bush's right-hand-in-the-air pledge every day on the campaign trail in 2000 to clean up after Bill Clinton.

In introducing Dean at a rally at his Des Moines headquarters, Rob Reiner captures the sentiment. Reiner, of course, is the liberal actor who played Archie Bunker's son-in-law, not-so-affectionately called "Meathead" by Archie. ("Can you look at him and not think 'Meathead'?" one reporter whispers to another. "I've been thinking it all day," replies his colleague.) Balding and paunchy with a goatee, Reiner now looks like an aging-but-still-striving-to-be-with-it high-school teacher. His warm-up for Dean is an anti-Bush rant: "George Bush said he would be a uniter, not a divider. He lied. George Bush said that he would leave no child behind. He lied. George Bush said that we had to go into Iraq because it had weapons of mass destruction. He lied. I don't know about you, but I'm tired of it. I'm tired of being lied to!"

Reiner loves Dean for his supposed counter-Bush qualities. "This man looks you in the eye," Reiner tells the crowd, "talks straightforwardly, and tells you the truth and you can count on him. You can trust this man. I'm sick and tired of being lied to and I want a leader who we can trust." And who can stick it to Bush. Reiner later tells a reporter, by way of explaining his endorsement: "He is a fighter. People in this country are very angry."

At least the people at Dean rallies are. The anger comes pulsing off Dean crowds. At an afternoon rally in New York City, part of a nationwide union tour, the candidate tries to be uplifting. He launches into a riff about the progress made in the civil-rights revolution, despite awful setbacks. Dean recalls how we "lost" Martin Luther King and "lost" Robert Kennedy, but before he can finish with a burst of inspiring rhetoric, a voice rings out from the back of the hall: "Let's 'lose' George Bush!" Even when the Vermont governor tries to inspire, he provokes from his audience a call—by implication—for the assassination of the President of the United States.

The New York union rally doesn't represent a typical Dean audience, at least not up to this point. Dean's momentum has just won him the endorsements of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Heretofore, Dean rallies have had the demographic of a Phish concert: young, white liberals. The crowd in the hall of New York's SEIU Local 32BJ skews, by contrast, older, and black and Hispanic. In this crowd, a young pale white girl wearing a pink backpack with a button for the feminist antiwar group "Code Pink" looks positively out of place.

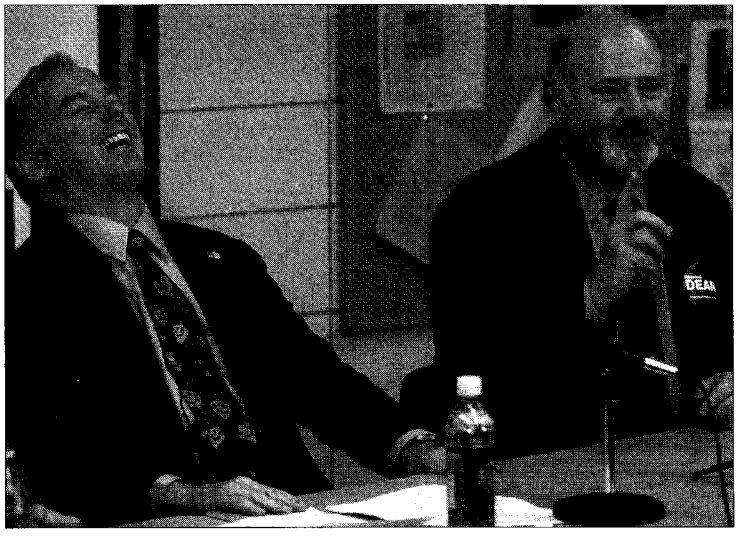
But Dean rage is an equal-opportunity phenomenon. The poster of Dean that people wave in the hall has a picture of him, not smiling like most politicians, but looking belligerent and irritated, like he's just been asked a hostile question. When he comes on stage, with the sleeves of his white dress shirt rolled up, he seems like he's spoiling for a fight. Dean is small, just 5'9", but there is something about his thick, stubby build that suggests coiled energy.

AFSCME head Gerald McEntee—chewing gum and decked out all in AFSCME green, a kind of angry union version of Will Ferrell's oversized elf—makes a hoarse denunciation of Bush as "that anti-worker, anti-family, anti-democracy president," eliciting peals of delight from the crowd. Dean takes it from there. He says Bush has given $3 trillion to Enron and Ken Lay. He compares Bush's record on jobs to Herbert Hoover's, and complains that the $87 billion in Iraq could better be spent on "investing" in roads, bridges, mass transit, renewable energy, and schools here.

It seems a standard-issue Democratic performance—until the end of his speech, when Dean tells the crowd, "Power to change the country is in your hands, not mine." Then he begins a chant: "You have the power!" He points with both hands out into the crowd each time he says it, a conductor working his orchestra into a smashing finale. "You have the power!" The crowd roars with every Dean shout, and for the moment—placards and flags waving in the noisy, packed union hall—it seems Dean is indeed the leader of a movement that is sweeping all before it.

But, for all that, there is ultimately a rent-a-crowd feel to the event (one advantage of union support, after all, is that they can rent crowds). When Dean ends his speech, he backs off from the microphones to join the New York elected officials standing behind him. Dean locks hands with them and they all raise their arms in a triumphant champion-prize-fighter pose for the crowd. But most of the audience is already heading out the door, even as a union official bellows into the microphones, "We can do it! We can do it!"

Outside the hall, a member of the painters union who had announced from the stage, "The painters are behind you 100 percent" explains that he was a last-minute stand-in: "I don't know much about Dean, but the people backstage said



AP/CHARLIE NEIBERGALL

Dean and Reiner in Des Moines

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he's pulling ahead." The painter says he used to be a Republican, "but look at this country." He waves his hand, gesturing toward what is a perfectly fine-looking section of downtown Manhattan. "There's no money to paint the Brooklyn Bridge," he complains, "because we're spending all that money over in Iraq."

The Des Moines rally headlined by Rob Reiner is a more typical Dean crowd, young white families and college kids milling about and drinking hot chocolate from large Dr Pepper cups. But what gets the Des Moines crowd going is the same thing that excited the union rally—Dean's "power to the people" finish, this time rendered in even more manic fashion: "YOU HAVE THE POWER! TO TAKE THE COUNTRY BACK! YOU-HAVE-THE-POWER-TO-TAKE-THE-COUNTRY-BACK-FROM-RUSH-LIMBAUGH-AND-JERRY-FALWELL-TO-TAKE-THE-WHITE-HOUSE-BACK-IN-2004-AND-THAT'S-EXACTLY-WHAT-WE'RE-GONNA-DO!!!"

SELLIN' ATTITUDE

These Dean riffs resonate, and have genuinely moved people. Riding in the van with reporters to a Des Moines debate is a young Dean aide. Pretty and blonde, she moved from a trendy downtown Manhattan neighborhood, giving up a job in the financial industry, to work in Dean's Iowa field operation. How many people have done that for John Kerry? She explains that she was "energized by this movement that Dean has created."

Dean does not specialize in substance, and besides his health-care plan doesn't have much in the way of fleshed-out policy. Dean is mostly selling an attitude.

What exactly is "this movement"? It's hard to tell. Dean does not specialize in substance, and besides his health-care plan doesn't have much in the way of fleshed-out policy. Dean is mostly selling an attitude. From the bitter cocktail of the 2000 Florida fiasco, the disappointment in the 2002 mid-term elections, and the opposition to the Iraq war has emerged a Democratic mood of anger and yearning that Dean has uniquely captured. Eventually the mood will pass, and then all the "Deaniacs" might have trouble explaining what so inspired them. But the mood is here now, and in politics, as in so much of life, timing is everything.

The rest of the field is playing Dean catch-up. In the Des Moines debate, John Kerry and Dick Gephardt join forces to beat up on Dean for budget cuts during his time as Vermont governor, portraying him as practically a heartless Republican. The Kerry and Gephardt campaigns distribute a flurry of press releases. "DEAN TOOK MONEY FROM TEACHERS' FUND, PRESCRIPTION DRUGS." "DEAN BALANCED BUDGET ON BACKS OF ELDERLY AND POOR." Kerry badgers Dean about his former statements supporting Medicare savings, asking him repeatedly whether he would restrain the rate of growth of Medicare spending in an accusatory tone, as if he's asking him if he is now, or ever has been, a Communist.

Dean emerges mostly unscathed, partly because he keeps his anger down, an effort that seems almost physical, something between choking down an unpleasant drink and keeping his head from popping off. He bounces into the scrum of reporters in "spin alley" after the debate to insist immediately: "Medicare is off the table." His opponents are unlikely to convince anyone that Dean is an enemy of the poor. But there is a chance Dean can be portrayed as a phony. The fact is that Dean governed, in Vermont terms, as a budget-balancing moderate. He could easily have run for the nomination as a Joe Lieberman centrist. Instead, the running room was to the left, especially with all the credible candidates on the record in support of the Iraq war resolution.

So Dean ran left. Very little in his campaign would have seemed a natural fit two or three years ago. He spent his career fighting the angry, shaggy Left in Vermont, exactly the constituency he is attracting nationally. He was a free-trader, but now tells the labor unions, "When I am president, we won't be talking about free trade in the Americas." He was pro-business, but now rails against corporations. He drove Vermont environmentalists batty with his flexible approach to regulation, but now seeks a comprehensive "re-regulation" of American business. To top it off, he was a computer illiterate who knew nothing about the Internet that has become an indispensable organizing tool for his campaign.

But having been branded so strongly as the fiery insurgent willing to speak truth to power, Dean probably is secure in his image. And, although much can still happen, he has to be regarded as the presumptive Democratic nominee. Then what?

NOT READY FOR PRIME TIME

The Dean camp is comforting itself with the liberal electoral myths that Bill Clinton had seemingly vanquished, relics of the wilderness years in the 1980s. That swing voters don't matter. That the Democratic party doesn't have a weak image on national security. That southern voters can be won over on economic issues. That a 100 percent high-octane liberalism will entice new voters into politics, changing all electoral equations. The last myth has been given new life by Dean's Internet fundraising, but the importance of this tactic shouldn't be overestimated. George McGovern, after all, pioneered direct-mail fundraising, then a radical new way to tap into small donations from ideologically motivated activists. It didn't make him any more electable.

Dean supporters also tell themselves that the candidate will eventually be able to reposition himself to the center, tapping back into his Vermont moderation. But Dean is a long way from Montpelier. Consider: Carol Moseley Braun, who says she couldn't reject the $87 billion in Iraq funding while the troops are still there, has a more responsible position on the issue than Dean. In

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the Des Moines debate, Dean won applause by praising *Dennis Kucinich's* position on the war. Even Kucinich, however, can't live up to Dean's standard of anti-Bush purity; Kucinich voted for Bush's education bill, the No Child Left Behind Act, which Dean routinely trashes.

The biggest wild card next year will be Iraq. The occupation could still prove a full-blown fiasco. Short of that, it's hard to see how Dean translates his Iraq-war rejectionism into a winning posture on national security. A political party can certainly neutralize one of the other party's best issues. It happens by either capitulating, as Clinton did in 1996 on welfare, or advancing a substantive alternative, as Bush did in 2000 on education. Dean so far shows no sign of doing either. Next year, he would have to clear a hurdle no candidate has faced since the end of the Cold War, and one that will be particularly daunting for a liberal candidate who governed a state of 600,000: Can you imagine him as commander in chief?

Then, there is Dean's cultural problem. With a few exceptions, Dean perfectly embodies the "blue state" half of the blue state/red state cultural split in the country. That the nation is so evenly divided culturally probably ensures that Dean won't suffer a McGovern-like blowout. But his cultural makeup will be a drag in the Midwest and eliminate any chances of competing in the South. Dean, as secular as presidential aspirants come, left the Episcopal Church in a dispute over a bike path in Burlington. He signed the first gay civil-unions law in the country, and even seems ready to re-fight some of the hoary cultural issues of 1980s, criticizing the high rates of imprisonment in the U.S. These cultural signatures will be more important to Dean's national image than how he handled the Vermont budget.

All that said, Dean's primary run has been dazzling. His current posture as a liberal firebrand, even if a product of circumstance, has enabled him to tap into the quality that people admire most in a politician: saying what he believes, and believing what he says. After the Manhattan union rally, a 71-year-old black man wearing a union jacket and with an iron-grip handshake that lasts a good minute says what he likes about the candidate: "Dean is like my handshake. It comes from the soul." That is certainly true of Dean's combative temperament, which is utterly genuine. He is no Al Gore, who had to consult his advisers on whether he would be a fighter or not and switched personas from debate to debate. Dean's rolled-up-sleeves toughness is refreshing, and suits the no-nonsense post-9/11 environment.

In this connection, it's almost painful to watch Dean do the obligatory reading-to-children routine prior to his early-childhood talk in Des Moines. He seems so out of place. The group of five-year-olds is perhaps the least pissed-off group of people Dean has addressed in a year. He perches atop a tiny one-foot-high chair and reads the story *Pizza Pat* to the kids. It is a performance shorn of Dean's animosities—except for anchovies. ("Have you heard of anchovies?" Dean asks. "They're *very salty*.") But even in this setting, Dean emphasizes his fighting spirit. He tells a few reporters that his campaign staff doesn't want him to wear "Save the Children" ties because the ties—flashy-colored, with childish depictions of kids—don't look presidential. Dean, who owns about 30 of them, says he led a "revolt" and now insists on wearing the ties. He has one on today. His aides were right. **NR**

■ THE WORLD

Debating Democracy

Can everyone go Athenian?

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

With his two recent speeches advocating a forward strategy to promote democracy in the Greater Middle East, President Bush has placed the concept of democracy at the very center of American political controversy. It was, of course, already on its fringes. Three debates over democracy at home and abroad have been roiling the intellectual world for several years now. One of those debates—the controversy over the place of democracy in U.S. foreign policy—is being fought out between neoconservatives and conservative "realists." The other two debates . . . well, let me draw a temporary veil over them except to say that they are as much about democracy at home and in Western Europe as about Iraq and the Third World.

A presidential speech trumps any number of books and learned articles because it implies a change of government policy. When a president promises to promote democracy in the Greater Middle East, he is announcing that the U.S. will transform its relations with the local powers there. In this instance, Bush is plainly urging democracy not only on hostile powers such as Syria and Iran but also on traditional "friends" such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. How is this to be accomplished? That is less clear. But we will presumably nudge them toward democracy with economic favors; coerce them with sanctions if they resist; and seek to undermine and replace them if they remain obdurate.

To describe this as ambitious is to be guilty of understatement. If such a grand strategy were to be pursued without extreme care and subtlety, it would risk producing regimes hostile to the U.S. and hospitable to terrorism—in between periods of anarchy—in a vital strategic and economic region. Admittedly, such regimes already exist, and periods of anarchy occur there from time to time. But prudence should warn us against adding to the problem. Nor is it sensible to inform such regimes they have nothing to lose by opposing us since we are determined to overthrow them in any event.

PRUDENCE AND OTHER VALUES

Before embarking on his democratization drive, therefore, Bush might want to examine the debate earlier this year between conservative realist Fareed Zakaria and neoconservative Robert Kagan. "Debate" is perhaps too mild a word to describe Kagan's sulphurous review of Zakaria's book, *The*

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Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad, in the pages of *The New Republic* and the subsequent exchange of barbs between the two writers. This exchange was, however, a serious confrontation between the leading proponents of the two schools. Kagan is the leading neoconservative advocate of promoting democracy. He outflanks even Bush on this topic, since he wants to promote democracy worldwide, including in China, rather than merely in the Middle East. Kagan seemed to take Zakaria's skepticism about the wisdom of promoting democracy in all circumstances as a personal affront; he interpreted Zakaria's warning that democracies not securely rooted in well-established liberal traditions and institutions would either develop authoritarian features or collapse altogether as inspired by a personal preference for aristocratic rule. If this made the debate occasionally bitter, it also meant that Kagan's critique was unusually thorough.

Who won? Kagan scored a number of effective points—for instance, that some of the regimes cited by Zakaria to demonstrate the failings of illiberal democracy were not democracies under any definition. On the whole, however, Zakaria won on the main points relevant to the current debate:

One. Democracy needs social, economic, and political underpinnings in order to flourish. These include the rule of law, a tradition of free speech and free inquiry, the concept of a loyal opposition, a private sector, and the development of a middle class used to making independent decisions.

Two. Democratic governments without these underpinnings tend to go off the rails. Zakaria stresses the tendency of such governments to develop illiberal features—as in today's Russia. Sometimes democracy collapses altogether. Latin America and the Middle East furnish examples—Argentina, Brazil, Lebanon, Iraq—in which elected governments have been overthrown in military coups. Kagan responds by arguing that democracy cannot be blamed for the sins of "failed democracy." But what if a democracy fails at regular intervals—as Argentina and Brazil have both done?

Three. Liberal institutions and practices can exist without democracy and elections. Once a country reaches a certain stage—a certain level of prosperity, or the acceptance by the government of legal restraints on itself such as a bill of rights—then pressure builds for democratic as well as liberal rights. Liberalism actually can be promoted from outside more readily than democracy. For instance, the U.S. is more able to persuade an authoritarian regime to release political prisoners or to respect academic freedom than to dissolve itself by holding elections.

So the U.S. government should be ready to offer various types of assistance: diplomatic pressure on a regime to abandon torture, public support for crowds demonstrating against a shaky despotism, mediation to persuade a dictator to go into exile. And that in fact is what the U.S. has traditionally done. One of the main points in Bush's recent speeches was an erroneous admission that the U.S. had put and kept despotic regimes in power because of Cold War priorities. This argument, originally advanced by the Cold War Left but now adopted by younger neoconservatives, greatly exaggerates U.S. responsibility for Third World despotisms and endorses the idea of American omnipotence that is these despotisms' standard excuse for their own failures.

Question: If the U.S. is omnipotent, why is Fidel Castro still in power? The prosaic truth is that, with a handful of exceptions, Third World despotisms were put and kept in power not by the U.S. but by domestic forces such as the army and local elites. (Not a single existing Mideast despotism was installed by a pro-American coup.) If Washington wasn't prepared to overthrow them in a series of Iraqs—which, reasonably enough, it was unwilling to do—it had to deal with them. Sometimes that meant forging military alliances, sometimes merely recognizing and trading with them, sometimes pressuring them to moderate their human-rights abuses.

There were cases—e.g., Zaire—in which U.S. relationships with odious regimes were too close and too prolonged. Even so there was no guarantee that if the U.S. expressed disapproval of Mobutu, he would fall from power. In the end it took foreign invasions to oust him. And the people of Zaire are no better off for his departure. In the more numerous cases where domestic popular opposition to dictators reached serious levels—in, among other countries, the Philippines, Korea, and Chile—the U.S. supported their overthrow. Sometimes that help was crucial at the margin; but in almost all such cases, the overwhelming impetus toward democracy was domestic. The U.S. merely helped local people.

In short, America is neither so powerful nor so wicked as it is depicted in the Cold War leftist critique that was swallowed by the president and regurgitated at Westminster. So the first lesson for President Bush is to be aware of the limits of American power; the second is to recognize when other societies are ready for democracy and capable of benefiting from our help; the third is to offer the right kind of help rather than suggesting democratic elections as the universal remedy; and the fourth is otherwise to do no harm.

That last lesson is no mere platitude. Some U.S. support for authoritarian regimes is entirely defensible in terms of American interests—including moral interests. For instance, the annual U.S. subsidy to Egypt was incurred, among other reasons, in order to prise Egypt out of the anti-Israel coalition and into a peace treaty. If abolishing that subsidy were to produce a "rejectionist" Egyptian regime, we would not advance human welfare by doing so. So, in addition to the other qualifications to the policy of promoting democracy, we must add such considerations as peace and, yes, the "stability" that is essential to prosperity.

UNDERMINING THE BALLOT BOX

If Zakaria is fundamentally correct in the first debate (over democracy abroad) he is more vulnerable to attack in the second debate (over democracy in America). The main paradox of current politics is that we are uncritically promoting democracy in the Middle East without apparently noticing that it is increasingly constrained at home by the transfer of power from elected bodies such as Congress to unaccountable institutions such as the courts, federal agencies, and international organizations. Not only does Zakaria not notice this transfer, but—following the traditional conservative suspicion of unrestrained populism—he calls for even more power to be transferred to institutions run by elites, on the grounds that democracy is in danger of running

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amok. This invites criticism not only from neoconservatives such as Kagan but also from unmodified conservatives such as the Hudson Institute's John Fonte who argue that traditional understandings of liberal democracy are being subtly transformed into a new hybrid multicultural regime of post-democracy that illegitimizes the concept of majority rule. In other words, Zakaria's diagnosis and prescription for the ills of American democracy is literally perverse: He calls for more power to the elites to cure the problems caused by the elites' exercising too much power. This leads him into a number of questionable stances:

One. Thinking that many problems are too difficult for the voters and their representatives to understand and solve, he proposes they be transferred to specialist agencies like central banks. But the reason that we leave central banks to set interest rates and monetary policy is that we now believe these to be technical questions capable of expert resolution. In the 1970s, when there was a serious dispute between Keynesians and monetarists, there was necessarily a political battle over monetary policy. Only when that expert debate was largely settled were the rest of us content to leave it to central banks. And if ever the experts agree on welfare policy, tax policy, or public spending, we may do the same. But until then, the public will demand to choose among expert solutions through the political process.

Two. Zakaria points out that democratic referenda, such as California's Proposition 13, tend to produce simplistic reforms that generate unexpected problems because they have not undergone the careful compromises of legislative crafting. But the same criticism could be made, at least as strongly, of judge-made "rights" legislation such as *Roe* v. *Wade*. From both these cases one might reasonably conclude that representative democracy is generally the best method of solving political problems. Judicial lawmaking should be rare; but as the decision of the Massachusetts supreme court establishing gay marriages illustrates, non-democratic legislation by the courts has changed American life far more thoroughly and controversially than the occasional referendum (which anyway is quite likely to be overturned by the courts). Yet it is referenda and not the courts on which Zakaria trains his fire.

Three. In a powerful and persuasive chapter of his book, Zakaria laments the decline of authority and the falling quality of the elites—their greater selfishness, their lack of public spirit, and their disconnection from most Americans. His criticisms strike home. What he does not seem to realize, however, is that these criticisms are far more disabling to his argument for non-democratic restraints on democracy than to democracy itself. After all, it is the elites who wield the non-democratic restraints. And the more they use their powers to correct democracy rather than merely to restrain or delay it, the more sinister their failings must appear and the more dangerous the weakness of mechanisms to correct them. Democracy generates its own authority in the voting booth, and wields its own correction in the form of throwing the rascals out. But professional standards are weaker than two generations ago, and—as the American Bar Association among other bodies illustrates—they have become much more politicized. Elites were once relied upon by conservatives like Zakaria (and me) to restrain mobs; today they are often distinguishable from mobs only by their credentials.

Nor is the rise of unaccountable elites in nominal democracies a purely American problem. Indeed, in most respects the U.S. is lagging behind Western Europe in the degree of power that it allows elites to exercise undemocratically. Recent elections and referenda in several European countries reveal a growing resistance to remote and unaccountable bureaucracies. This is the theme of the third debate—namely, what is the democratic legitimacy underlying those international structures that increasingly influence our lives? This issue has been misrepresented, in discussions about such questions as the Kyoto accords and the International Criminal Court, as a conflict between nationalism and internationalism or between European multilateralism and American "unilateralism." It is, in fact, a conflict between two opposing kinds of internationalism: the American concept of an internationalism in which power flows upwards from the democratic nation-state and the European vision of a trans-nationalism in which power flows downwards from "the international community." And as Francis Fukuyama pointed out last year, the European vision is another way of transferring power to elites: "The very idea that this legitimacy is handed downwards from a willowy, disembodied international level rather than handed upwards from concrete, legitimate democratic publics on a nation-state level virtually invites abuse on the part of elites who are then free to interpret the will of the international community to suit their own preferences." Until the U.S. begins to present the choice in this clear-sighted way, however, it will continue to be wrong-footed in these debates.

We should focus our attention on protecting traditional concepts of liberal democracy in the United States and on defending a democratic internationalism in foreign affairs.

To sum up, then, we risk promoting democracy in the wrong place at the wrong time. Rather than a wholesale push for democracy in the Third World—where promoting liberal institutions would be a more prudent policy—we should focus our attention on protecting traditional concepts of liberal democracy in the United States and on defending a democratic internationalism in foreign affairs. And to do so will mean refining and even abandoning the conservative attachment to elite restraints on democracy that once served us well but that now privilege our enemies and our opponents. **NR**

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■ NATIONAL POLITICS

The Tempting of Conservatism

In supporting Bush and the GOP, don't lose yourself

RAMESH PONNURU

Have conservatives abandoned their principles in the Bush era? Has partisanship trumped ideological conviction? If we are speaking of the activists, journalists, think-tankers, and other unelected opinion leaders of the Right, the answer is plainly no. Conservatives have had no trouble denouncing President Bush's steel tariffs, his Medicare bill, his profligate spending, and so on. Libertarian-minded conservatives have roundly criticized the Patriot Act. Social conservatives have complained that the administration has not done more to resist gay rights. Conservatives have, by my lights, been if anything too unreflective in their criticisms, too unwilling to acknowledge the political circumstances that constrain (even if they do not determine) Bush's actions on Medicare or trade.

It is true, however, that conservatives have become more partisan in recent years: more heavily invested, that is, in the fortunes of the Republican party. But this is not an entirely bad thing since there are principled reasons for it. The fact is that conservatives' fortunes are tied to those of the Republican party. There will always be some tension between an ideological movement and the political party in which it exercises its principal influence. But that tension has lessened as conservatives have become part of the party establishment and the party establishment has moved right. The near parity between the major political parties, together with that rightward move, has raised the stakes. To put it more concretely: Making sure that a moderate Republican beats a Democrat in a House district in Georgia matters more to conservatives now than it would have in 1976.

If Republicans can make gains in ways that either conform with or do not violate conservative tenets, conservatives have every reason to cheer them on. When Democrats tried to change the election rules to their benefit in mid-count in Florida, conservatives could oppose them in good faith. They could root for the Texas Republicans this year as they attempted to redraw the congressional boundaries to *their* benefit. Liberal journalists claimed that the Republicans were violating some sacred principle by redistricting after a court had already drawn the map for this decade. But this "principle" was tailor-made for liberal advantage, and conservatives (George Will excepted) rightly ignored the wailing.

Conservative partisanship becomes problematic when it is at the expense of actual conservative principle. The very tightness of the alliance between conservative opinion elites and the Republican party makes the temptation for the former to regard themselves as an adjunct of the latter more powerful—and more important to resist. And while conservatives have not been corrupted to the point of betraying their principles, there are some troubling signs that they are getting caught up in a kind of team spirit that subtly undermines those principles. Their behavior in three recent controversies suggests that there are reasons for worry.

THE ACCOUNTING SCANDALS

When Enron started making front-page headlines in 2002, the story was widely regarded as an indictment of deregulation and laissez faire—and of the Republican party, which was associated with those ideas and which had ties to the corporation. There were any number of responses that a conservative might have had to the situation. For purposes of simplification, however, let us boil them down to three.

Conservatives could have chosen to make some version of Case One: "Business scandals often arise in the late stages of economic booms. When they are exposed, lenders become more cautious; the market corrects itself. Where scandals involve law-breaking, the perpetrators should be punished. There may be ways to improve public policy as well. But the mere existence of scandals does not demonstrate that new regulations are appropriate. Any such regulations may very well cost more than they are worth, and the specific regulations being discussed are bad ideas."

Case Two would have been something like the following: "The scandals show some real problems in corporate governance that should be addressed by an intelligent, rather than spastic, application of new regulations. Some of the regulations being discussed would be worthwhile, some of them not."

Here's what Case Three would have looked like: "The misbehavior occurred mostly during the Clinton years, and it is evidence of the moral decay that Clinton promoted. The Democrats repeatedly failed to impose controls over executive stock options and to crack down on accounting fraud. There is no evidence that the Republicans were unduly influenced by Enron in setting public policy. President Bush is working on a reform bill that will prevent these abuses from recurring."

Very few people spoke up for the first alternative, which is the one I myself favored. A conservative with a less free-market bent could argue in good faith for the second one, and some did. But the dominant note sounded by conservatives was the third alternative, which was, unsurprisingly, also the one favored by the Bush administration. There were elements of truth to that response. The Republicans really had not turned over energy policy to Enron, and conservatives were right to say so. The fault of the conservative message was that it defended the Bush administration without seriously engaging the corporate-governance issues and, indeed, tacitly conceded those issues to the Left.

Conservatives did not, for the most part, argue for a free-market policy response to the scandals—or for any other response. Nor did they do anything to counter the Republicans' political panic regarding the scandals. In previous instances where the Democrats, the media, and the polls were demanding government action in response to some alleged crisis, conservatives explained that there was, in fact, no need for Republicans to "do something"

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about it to win the next election. Such a case would have been easy to make in the summer of 2002, and looks easier in retrospect.

With a very few exceptions, the think tanks were silent. Only a handful of right-leaning journalists swam against the tide. This conservative disengagement was not the only reason that Congress quickly passed the Sarbanes-Oxley bill to regulate accounting and thus "restore confidence in the markets." But it was a contributing factor. The bill did nothing to get the markets rising again; that came several months later, perhaps as a result of Bush's 2003 tax cuts. But the regulations are still on the books, and conservatives are only now beginning to realize how much they will cost.

Conservatives chose to defend the Republicans rather than free markets or even rational regulation. The result was that the Republicans did fine, but free markets took a beating.

THE WAR

The vast majority of conservatives—talk-show hosts, writers, activists, and rank-and-file voters alike—supported the decision to use force to topple the Iraqi regime. I was, and am, one of those conservatives. I think the war was justified both based on what we had reason to believe at the time it began, and based on what we believe now. Absent the war, the sanctions on Iraq would have become still weaker, and the regime would have been able, and willing, to make a menace of itself. There was also a strategic upside: the chance, however remote it may look at present, to create a relatively free society in the Middle East and thus to transform the geopolitics of the region.

Nonetheless, it has been hard not to wince at some of the bombast emanating from the pro-war Right. A case in point was the labeling, by some right-leaning commentators, of opponents of administration policy as "objectively pro-Saddam." The phrase is Stalinist in derivation: Social democrats and others were called "objectively fascist" because they resisted the Communists. Later, the phrase was used by non-Communists in ironic evocation of the Stalinists. In the last two years, however, the irony has been taken back out from the phrase. No doubt in some cases the label fit: A few commentators and activists were probably hoping for a Saddam victory. But as a blanket indictment of opponents of the war, it is a smear—unless, that is, it is fair to describe people as "objectively pro-" every dictator they do not wish to use American military force to oust.

Other conservative tropes, while not wrong in themselves, quickly reached a point of excess. The France-bashing was good clean fun, and it served a purpose. Some Americans had taken the strange position that our military action would have to be blessed by the United Nations, and therefore France, to be morally legitimate. The attacks on France helped to counter that idea. Some conservatives went on to suggest that France was showing a culpable ingratitude for our sacrifices in World War II. Strictly speaking, the claim made little sense: Surely France is not forever obligated to align with American policy because we liberated it to make its own decisions. On the other hand, the observation was a useful corrective to the idea that America is a selfish power or a force for evil in the world.

The worst thing about the moral critique of France, however, was its inattention to strategic considerations, which made it self-defeating. Conservatives have been so eager to blast Jacques Chirac for not getting behind Bush that we have largely failed to think through how French and American interests diverge, particularly with regard to the European Union, and how to respond to that divergence. Our slogan might as well be: Don't get even, get mad.

When the war ended, conservative commentators were confronted with the challenge of grappling with the failure to find weapons of mass destruction. Most of them ducked it. They made various inventive explanations for why they had not been found, why small bits of evidence of their existence closed the case entirely, and why the weapons did not matter that much after all. Saddam had destroyed the weapons as he went down to defeat; the weapons had been moved to Syria; the case for war never was primarily about the weapons.

In part, this conservative performance on the war was a response to the ugliness and folly of the war's domestic opponents. These opponents often claimed that the war was motivat-

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ed by America's thirst for oil or President Bush's desire to avenge his father, and that the failure to find the weapons proved that the president had been lying. The blogosphere encouraged a hyperkinetic style in conservative commentary, as in political commentary generally. Conservatives have felt compelled to respond to the latest idiotic calumny of the administration on some left-wing website.

But scoring debaters' points is not a substitute for serious thought. It was true, for example, that some of the claims about the post-war looting of Baghdad were overblown, as conservatives rightly pointed out. But there was actual looting, and it may have undermined America's project in Iraq. When Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld suggested that the looting was a manifestation of freedom, conservatives should have been appalled. If any were, they kept their feelings private.

JUDGES

Getting President Bush's judicial nominees confirmed is a top priority of conservatives, as it should be. In their zeal to achieve this goal, however, conservatives have embraced just about any argument that the Republicans have made—even when these arguments have had little merit and would set back the conservative cause on judicial issues.

Conservative arguments have taken on a growing slackness.

The current Republican/conservative line on judges runs as follows: The president deserves a fair amount of deference from senators when it comes to judicial appointments. The Senate's role should be confined to weeding out people who are unqualified—with qualifications being understood in terms of intelligence, professional ratings, and the like—and who are, perhaps, far out of the mainstream in their legal views. Senators should not take a nominee's "ideology" into account. That would "politicize" the judiciary, which is a no-no. Senators may not ask nominees how they would rule on cases of a particular type (e.g., those involving abortion). Filibusters of judicial nominees are a terrible distortion of the confirmation process.

All of these views are presented as though they were commanded by the Constitution or, at least, recommended by the Founders. But there is very little evidence that the Founders believed anything close to these views (or, for that matter, that they had *any* well-developed views about how to treat a judiciary as powerful as ours has become). It's hard to imagine a good argument for them.

If "ideology" refers to policy convictions rather than jurisprudential ones, then the Republicans are right to say that it should not be considered during the confirmation process. It should be possible for a nominee to be confirmed even if he believes the New Deal was socialist, or that gay marriage is a good idea, or that abortion should be illegal, or that abortion should be legal—so long as he is prepared to acknowledge that the law he is interpreting may point in a direction opposite from his policy views. Senate Democrats do appear to be using policy tests of this sort, and Republicans are right to object to it. But Republicans also object when such Democrats as Sen. Charles Schumer argue that nominees can be rejected on the basis of their *legal* views.

If the shoe were on the other foot, conservatives would have no difficulty in seeing that Senator Schumer is right—on that point at least. If a liberal judicial nominee came forward who thought that it was within the judicial function to order gay marriage, to raise taxes, and to impose racial preferences, conservatives would object. They would ask that nominee questions designed to learn the scope of the power that he would claim for himself. If they could block that nominee, they would—by filibuster if necessary. And they would be right to do so.

Where Schumer and his colleagues go wrong (or rather, among the places they go wrong) is not in evaluating nominees on the basis of their legal views, but in the substance of their evaluation. They want, for example, to block nominees who think *Roe* v. *Wade* was mistaken and should be overruled. They are wrong because the Constitution does not, in truth, require that abortion be legal. They want judges to impose a policy that they favor, which they claim is in the Constitution, but which is not really there. If they were right about the Constitution, they would be right to demand what they demand from judges.

Most Republican officials would prefer to avoid arguing about what is in the Constitution and what isn't. Such an argument would require them to take on *Roe*, which is popular (or at least polls well). Conservative lawyers who would like to be judges, meanwhile, have an understandable interest in seeing the temperature of confirmation battles turned down. So both groups invoke procedural standards (e.g., filibusters are anti-democratic) that prescind from any particular constitutional judgments (e.g., *Roe* is bad law). But the procedural standards are ludicrous. The complaints about legislators' alleged "politicization of law" also distract conservatives' attention from what should be their real concern: the judicial usurpation of politics. When judges rule us, the fact that they rule us, and the way that they rule us, *should* be a political issue.

Republicans, and their conservative allies, have been willing to make these lame arguments to rescue even nominees whose jurisprudence is questionable. Janice Rogers Brown, one of Bush's nominees, has argued that there is properly "an extra-constitutional dimension to constitutional law." She has said that judges should be willing to invoke a "higher law" than the Constitution. She has said that judicial activism is not troubling per se; what matters is the "worldview" of the judicial activist. If a liberal nominee to the courts said similar things, conservatives would make quick work of her.

In none of the three areas I have discussed would it be accurate to say that conservatives have betrayed their principles. But they have come close, and their arguments have taken on a growing slackness. Conservatives have not consciously decided that their chief purpose in life is to serve as cheerleaders for the Republican party. If they ever do—or ever fall into acting that way without making the decision—they will have negated the reasons for their own existence. **NR**

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the long view

ROB LONG

U.S. Department of Labor
Occupational Safety & Health Administration
OSHA

News Release USDL 97-431
Monday, December 8, 2003
Contact: Frank Kane (202) 555-2716

OSHA CITES NORTH POLE VIOLATOR

Calling working conditions "obscene" and "unhealthful," OSHA investigators have permanently closed a North Pole toy factory. The owners—absentee for part of the year—were also cited and taken into custody. Numerous violations were recorded, both in the safety of the workers (almost all of substandard size) and in the physical conditions of their workspace.

Among the abuses and/or code violations:

Insufficient break time for the elves—OSHA requirements clearly demand two (2) 15-minute breaks per 8-hour work period.

Dangerous hats worn by elves using heavy equipment—OSHA prohibits the use of pointy and/or green felt headgear in and around moving parts.

Inappropriate and/or unsafe footwear required by Operator. Workers of substandard general size are entitled under OSHA Federal Employee Code 145B/90A to employer-issued hard-toe footwear. Operator required employees to wear soft felt footcoverings, with small noisemaking bell-type devices attached to the toe tip. (In re bell-type devices, see OSHA Federal Employee Code 1899T/85S, "The Right to a Quiet Workspace.")

At least a dozen employees of substandard size report suffering from symptoms of depression. Operator refused to supply adequate mental-health care, relying instead on the distribution of candy-cane-type candies.

Insufficient parking: Although Operator and his wife maintain a levitating sleigh (investigators were unable to personally eye-witness this contraption), the workers themselves are not provided parking facilities. The factory is currently out of range of public transportation. Employees of substandard size required to walk in wet snow. (See Footwear violation above.)

Employee toilet facilities were inadequate. Employees of substandard size—especially of uniform substandard size—require sinks and commodes no more than one foot (12 inches) from the ground in the case of sinks, and three inches in the case of commodes. Operator's repeated promises to provide tiny steps and/or foot stools were not honored. In addition, only standard-sized toilet-seat-type toilet coverings were provided for substandard-sized employees, resulting in at least one accidental drowning.

Repetitive motion injuries common in the "Tickle Me Elmo" department.

Room-and-board provisions were not up to code. Sleeping facilities were cramped and lacked privacy. And food service, provided exclusively by the Operator's wife, lacked variety and proper attention to nutrition. Employees cited numerous cases of "milk-and-cookies sickness."

During the "crunch months" of October through December, employees were refused overtime compensation.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome created by "making a list and checking it twice."

An atmosphere of "fear" and "intimidation" was cited by several employees of substandard size. Employees reported the absence of a vetted grievance procedure and described a working environment built upon threats and retaliation. Operator, apparently, maintained a cheerful and distant demeanor. Operator's wife, though, is reported to be the "enforcer," creating a terrifying "good Claus, bad Claus"-type environment.

Inadequate stress counseling provided in the Barbie and Barbie-Licensed Product department, resulting in severe self-esteem issues among female employees of substandard size. Five cases of Elfin Anorexia went untreated.

Finally, employees reported to investigators that, despite their pleas and the federal statutes prohibiting employers from requiring employees to work on religious holidays, they have never once had the Dec. 25 holiday ("Christmas") off.

Operator and his wife were led away from the facility in leg-irons, to the taunts and jeers of their former employees. Both are now in custody and are awaiting arraignment. Please refer all questions regarding their legal defense to their attorney, Mr. Alan Dershowitz.

During the investigation, OSHA inspectors uncovered numerous cases of insufficient and/or fraudulent financial record-keeping. Relevant evidence has been turned over to the Internal Revenue Service and New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer.

The exterior buildings of the facility were also investigated by Humane Society volunteers. Eight reindeer were rescued from "filthy" and "substandard" stables. One reindeer suffers from roseacea of the nose and will be humanely destroyed.

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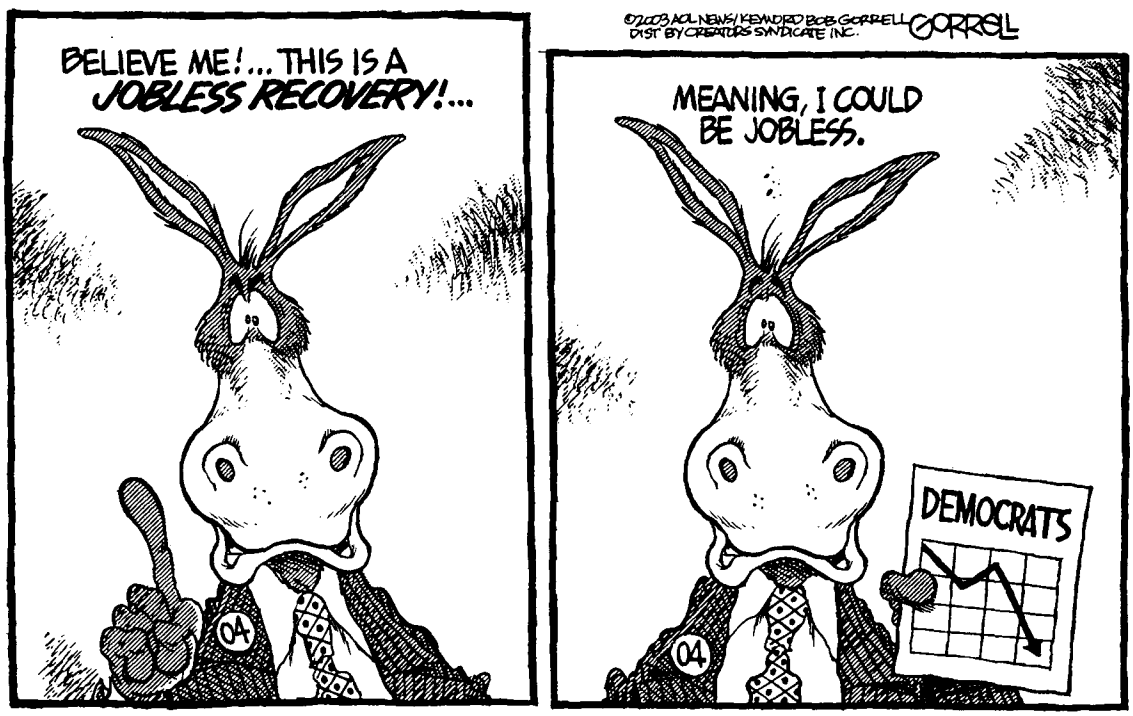
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DEMOCRATS

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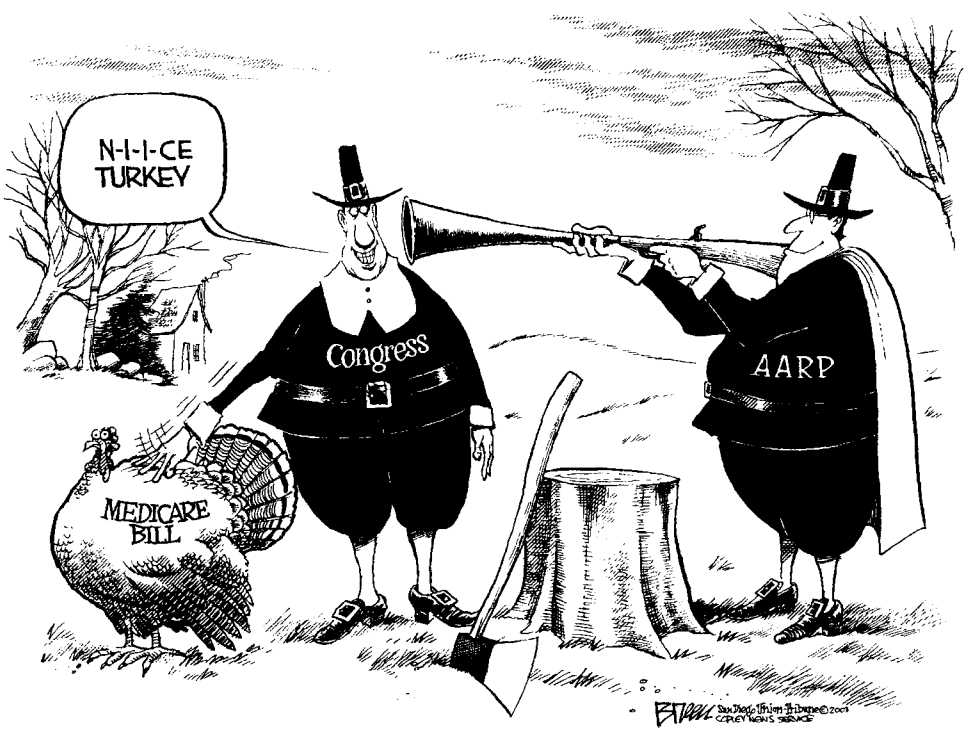
George's Surprise

The Democrats were seething, though
Of course they couldn't show it,
When George sneaked off Thanksgiving Day
And managed not to blow it.
He wasn't, like Red Riding Hood,
Digested by some Sunni—
A denouement that left the Dems
A tad this side of loony.

—W. H. von Dreele

"Well, I guess it all started when I announced my candidacy . . ."



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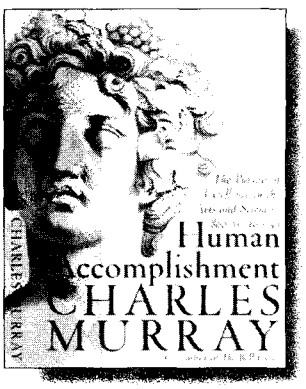
The Datanaut



Human Accomplishment: The Pursuit of Excellence in the Arts and Sciences, 800 B.C. to 1950, by Charles Murray (HarperCollins, 688 pp., $29.95)

JOHN DERBYSHIRE

NEVER have data been accessible in such quantities to so many people. Any middle-class citizen can, in the comfort of his own study, with a few movements of his fingers bring to his eyes the entire 2000 U.S. Census, or the price of every stock on all the world's bourses, or the past and future positions of all the planets and their moons. He can then inspect those numbers for as long as he wishes. That will not usually be very long. Even for the professional demographer, or stockbroker, or astronomer, the pleasures of browsing data on that scale soon pall. Our citizen soon finds himself like a ship's passenger looking out across the ocean on a calm day. With a maximum of concentration he might notice a line of whitecaps here, a change of sea color there; but the sheer quantity of near-featureless water soon wearies his attention, and he turns with relief to the variety offered by his book, his game, his companions.

To the master mariner, of course, the ocean is anything but featureless. It is a cathedral of complexity—of shoals and deeps, rocks and reefs, tides and currents. Those whitecaps, that color change, for him are freighted with meaning. They are signs, markers. Any particular sign might be ambiguous; but taken together, and weighed with the judgment attained through long experience, they reveal deep truths, and guide his ship safely to harbor.

I once suggested to Charles Murray that the true object of his intellectual passion is not sociology, or psychology, or psychometry, but statistics. Murray: "If you had said 'data,' you would have been nearer to the truth." That was when he was still at work on *Human Accomplishment*. Reading the book now, I see the wisdom of his reply. Murray is a master mariner of data—a datanaut, as it were. The science of statistical analysis supplies his tool kit—his sounding line and sextant—but his passion is for the numbers, and the truths that lie hidden in their dim green depths.

The data set he investigates in *Human Accomplishment*, the ocean on which he sailed for the five years it took him to write this book, is the record of accomplishment at the highest levels in art, music, literature, philosophy, and science. Murray thus confronted a very daunting problem right away. In one important respect this data set is unlike the census, the stock tables, or the ephemeris: It is not numeric. It is not recorded in neat ranks of digits, but scattered wordily across biographical dictionaries, encyclopedias, indexes, and compendiums. As a lover of poetry, I am certain that Shelley gave us more than did Southey; as a student of mathematics, I know very well that the accomplishments of Hilbert exceed those of Hausdorff; but if you asked me to supply quantitative justification for those statements, I would be at a loss.

Murray's passion is for the numbers, and the truths that lie hidden in their dim green depths.

Not so our fearless datanaut. For this book Murray has assembled a judicious selection of sources—those catalogs, encyclopedias, and so on, all of them listed in an appendix. He has painstakingly combed through his sources, measuring column inches and counting index entries. He has devised a sensible and rigorous definition of "significance" in the areas of endeavor he is covering. From all that, he has made a list of 4,002 "significant figures" in 21 categories of accomplishment under the five broad headings I mentioned above. To give some examples from the borderlines: The 479 significant figures in Western art include Stubbs, but not Landseer. In the 239 for technology, there is Fahrenheit but not Réaumur; in the 39 for Chinese philosophy, Kang Youwei but not Zhang Binglin; in the 522 for Western music, Salieri but not Pescetti.

Murray has further supplied a ranking—he calls it an "index"—for each figure in each category, from 100 for the figure taking up most space in his sources, to 1 for the figures (there are lots of ties, especially at the low end) taking least. Thus in chemistry, Lavoisier has index 100, while in Western music, Salieri is a mere 5.

This all sounds like pretty dry stuff. Fortunately Murray is a fluent and engaging writer. His method does, of course, raise many questions; but he has the knack of anticipating each question just as it forms in the reader's mind. How do we know that a different selection of sources would not yield different results? Isn't he just measuring fame, rather than accomplishment? How can such a study avoid "epochcentrism"—that is, inflated attention to more recent accomplishments? Do these ranked tables and indexes actually reflect something real in the real world? A dozen or more similar queries will easily occur to the reader. Murray has thought of every one. A social and hospitable man with a wide circle of acquaintances in all walks of life, he has chewed over all these issues. You might not agree with his conclusions, of

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THE NORTH POLE

Dear *NR* Friend,

Sure, we'll have a Merry Christmas, but it's that New Year I'm worried about -- it's sure to fall short of being "happy." That's tough for a jolly guy to admit. But we must face facts: 2004 will be a vitriolic, partisan, humbug-filled election year.

You know the score, but then you read *National Review*. You're fortunate! But what about those friends and kinfolk who don't get America's best magazine?! They'll be at the mercy of liberal media indoctrinators throughout 2004!

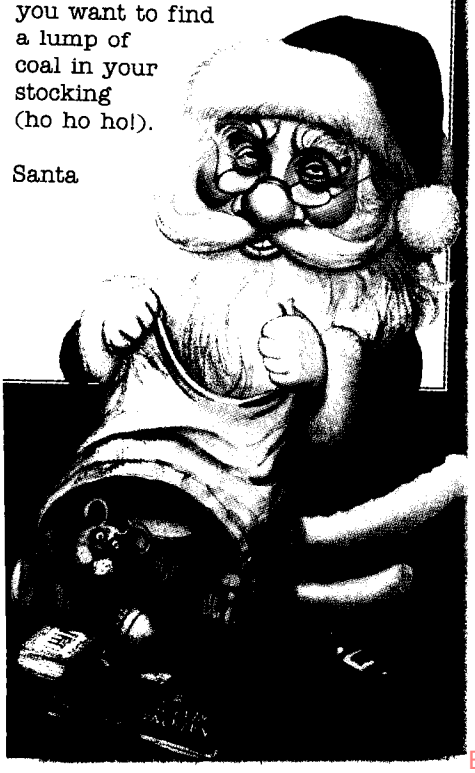
Don't let that happen: This Christmas, give those dearest to you a full-year subscription (25 big issues!) to *National Review*.

National Review is the gift that keeps on giving (every fortnight!), providing the lucky recipient of your generosity with sanity that will stretch from the Iowa caucuses and Super Tuesday on to the debates, Election Day, and (my favorite!) Electoral College voting.

I've said it before: There's no better Christmas present you can give than *National Review*. And that will be extra true for 2004.

So listen to Santa. Give the gift of *National Review*. Unless you want to find a lump of coal in your stocking (ho ho ho!).

Santa



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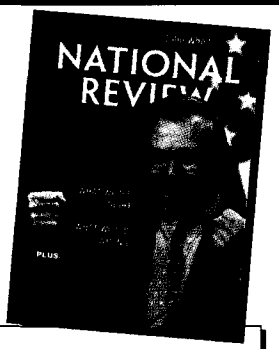

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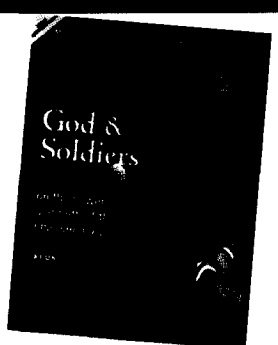

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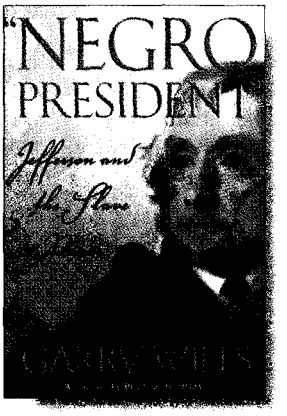
course; but you will have to get up early in the morning to think of a methodological objection that has not already occurred to Murray.

Much more interesting than the questions posed by his methodology are those that arise from his results. Those results are not, on the whole, very surprising in themselves. Tops in Western music? Beethoven, Mozart. Mathematics? Euler, Newton. Astronomy? Galileo, Kepler. They do, though, imply some surprising conclusions. For instance, Murray's analyses seem to show that the rates of human accomplishment in both arts and sciences (yes, yes, allowing for population—never imagine you can think of something Murray has not already thought of) have been declining since the middle of the 19th century. Why should this be? Why, to take another conundrum, did the emancipation of European Jews lead to such a huge surge in numbers of Jewish significant figures, while no corresponding surge followed the emancipation of women?

Many of the issues that arise from *Human Accomplishment* trespass, as that last question does, into the carefully tended, vigilantly policed gardens of Political Correctness. I have already seen it argued that Murray has merely created a picture of human accomplishment in his own image, populated by those Dead White Males whom middle-aged conservatives esteem. Murray has thought through all that, too, and offers convincing refutations of such charges. It is simply the case that practically all the great accomplishments of the human race since A.D. 1400 have belonged to European men. Why this should have been so is another of the very interesting questions raised by this book. So far as "European" is concerned, Murray is inclined to think that much of the credit should go to Christianity, which of all religions seems best able to provide us with a purpose in life, and a motivation for attempting great deeds.

That, I suppose the critics will say, is yet more smug solipsism. Possibly so: but then, let's see *your* methodology; let's watch *you* sail this ocean; let's see whether *you* can come safely to shore—and, when you have docked, let's see what new understandings, what maps and charts, *you* have brought home with you. **NR**

Piling on Jefferson



"Negro President": Jefferson and the Slave Power, by Garry Wills (Houghton Mifflin, 274 pp., $25)

EARL M. MALTZ

Poor Thomas Jefferson. After many years of unconditional love from scholars and the general public, the author of the Declaration of Independence now finds his reputation under attack from a number of quarters. The widespread interest in Jefferson's relationship with Sally Hemings has cast a particularly harsh light on his attitude toward slavery. In this new book, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Garry Wills joins the chorus. While disclaiming any intention to engage in "Jefferson-bashing," he focuses on Jefferson's "role as a defender and extender of the slave system," and purports to give readers fresh insights into the influence of the "slave power" on Jefferson's election and policies. Wills describes Jefferson as "a giant, but a giant trammeled in a net, and obliged (he thought) to keep repairing and strengthening the coils of that net."

Throughout, Wills emphasizes what he sees as the overwhelming influence of the slave power and downplays the importance of congressional actions that limited slavery. For instance, he describes the Northwest Ordinance—despite its undoubted significance to the ultimate extinction of slavery in Illinois and Indiana—as a "pyrrhic" victory for anti-slavery forces because it did not result in the *immediate* disappearance of slavery from the area north of the Ohio River. This general perspective on the sectional conflict is already well represented by the Neoabolitionist school of Early American historians, and informs important works by scholars such as Paul Finkelman, Leonard Richards, Donald Robinson, and William Wiecek. Wills lacks the deep understanding of the issues that has made these authors' work indispensable; his book is therefore a major disappointment.

At times, *"Negro President"* fails to satisfy the most basic criterion for historical scholarship: simple accuracy. Of course, almost every historian makes silly mistakes on names, dates, and places; minor errors can be forgiven. In this book, however, some of the factual misstatements concern matters that are central to Wills's analysis. A particularly egregious example is the author's characterization of the voting record of Federalist Timothy Pickering of Massachusetts, whom he describes as the "anti-Jefferson." While acknowledging some of Pickering's shortcomings, Wills finds much to admire in what he sees as the man's consistent, steadfast opposition to slavery and the slave power. Wills explicitly contrasts Pickering's positions not only with those of Jefferson, but also with those of relatively timid Federalists such as John Quincy Adams. Indeed, the book is almost as much about Pickering as it is about Jefferson.

Unfortunately, Wills's portrayal of Pickering is based in part on misinformation. In 1804, when Congress was considering a measure to organize the Louisiana Purchase, Sen. James Hillhouse of Connecticut proposed to abolish slavery in all of the territory that had been acquired from France. The Hillhouse amendment provided senators with a rare opportunity to vote directly against the institution of slavery; not surprisingly, although the motion failed by a 17–11 vote, many Northern Federalists supported the amendment. Pickering, however, was not one of them: The *Annals of Congress* lists Pickering as voting against it. Wills never

Mr. Maltz is a professor of law at Rutgers. His latest book is *The Fourteenth Amendment and the Law of the Constitution.*

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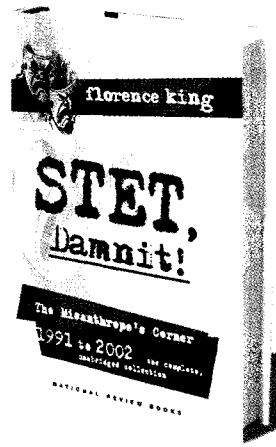

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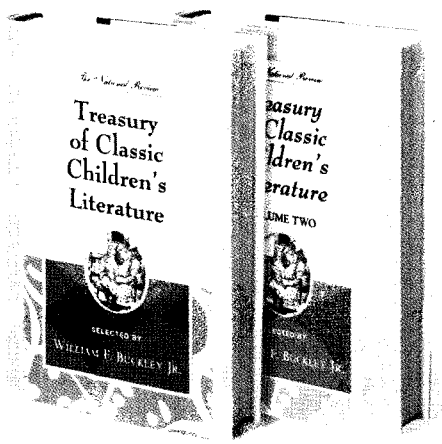

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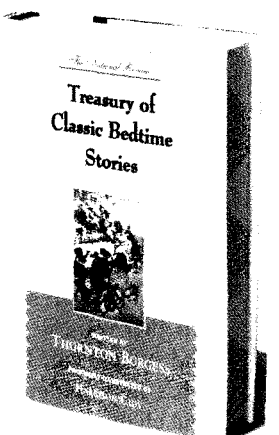

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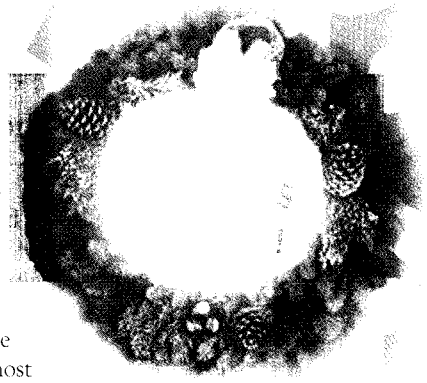

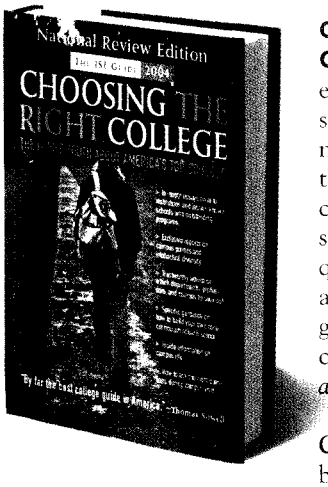

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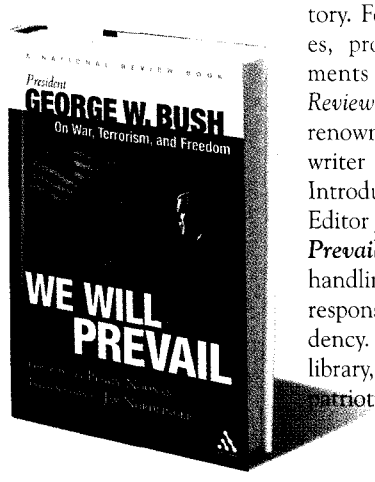

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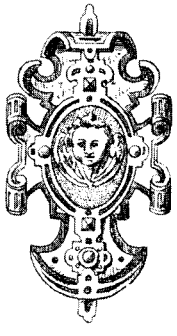
addresses this problem; instead, he portrays Pickering as a *supporter* of the Hillhouse proposal, explicitly relying on this "fact" to distinguish Pickering from Adams. Knowledgeable scholars are left to wonder about the source of Wills's information, while nonspecialists will simply be misled.

Even when he gets his basic facts straight, Wills produces analysis that is often at once pretentious and unsophisticated. His shortcomings are typified by the discussion of the 1800 election, in which Jefferson defeated John Adams. Wills begins by asserting that "if real votes alone had been counted, Adams would have been returned to office." The reference to "real votes" is itself somewhat misleading, suggesting that Jefferson and Adams were engaged in a contest in which ordinary citizens participated directly, and that Jefferson owed his victory to voter fraud. In fact, the actual votes that mattered were cast by electors chosen in each state separately. Moreover, in the election of 1800, the electors were selected by popular vote in only 5 of the 16 participating states. In the remaining eleven states, the electors were chosen by the state legislatures—a point that Wills himself later acknowledges in passing.



Against this background, Wills must be understood as making an inartful reference to the impact of slave ownership on the outcome of the vote in the Electoral College. His basic argument has four simple steps. First, the number of votes to which a state is entitled in the Electoral College is calculated by adding its number of seats in the House of Representatives to the number of senators to which it is entitled. Second, prior to the abolition of slavery, a state's representation in the House of Representatives was determined by adding the number of free inhabitants of the state to three-fifths the number of its slaves. Third, Jefferson was the beneficiary of the overwhelming majority of slave-state electoral votes. Fourth, if these electoral votes had not been counted, Adams would have won.

Wills clearly believes that this analysis makes an important, original contribution to our understanding of the election of 1800. Citing a small handful of sources, he asserts that the impact of the three-fifths compromise is a "controversial and neglected aspect of Thomas Jefferson's presidency" and that "few treatments of [the election] even mention the fact that Jefferson won it by the slave count." In fact, this aspect of Jefferson's victory has been discussed by a wide variety of historians, including William Freehling, Leonard Richards, Donald Robinson, Peter Onuf, and James Rogers Sharp. Wills's description of the election will be surprising only to those who are unfamiliar with the literature.

Moreover, Wills's analysis is seriously inadequate. He misstates the import of the three-fifths compromise itself, declaring that the Constitution "allow[ed] a man to gain three hundred votes in Congress by owning five hundred human beings." More important, Wills vastly oversimplifies the relationship between the vote in the Electoral College and the preferences of the populace at large. The assertion that Adams would have won if only "real votes" had been counted strongly implies that Adams would have been the victor in a nationwide popular vote. In fact, as historians Stanley M. Elkins and Eric L. McKitrick have demonstrated, the evidence is to the contrary: Not only did the Jeffersonians win an overwhelming victory in elections for the House of Representatives, but Jefferson's strength in the Electoral College was reduced by a variety of factors that were unrelated to the relative popularity of the two candidates and their principles. If the preference of the electorate is the benchmark for legitimacy, then the operation of the three-fifths compromise simply counteracted other vagaries in the electoral process and led to the correct result.

Wills never confronts or even mentions this evidence—an omission that is particularly mystifying because he relies on the work of Elkins and McKitrick for other purposes later in the book. This pattern is repeated throughout *"Negro President"*—which ends up as basically a work of sound-bite history, riddled with oversimplifications and outright inaccuracies, and adding little to our understanding of slavery and the politics of the early republic. **NR**

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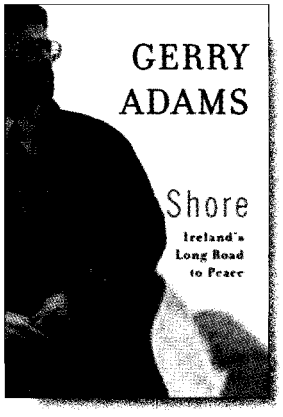

A Farther Shore: Ireland's Long Road to Peace, by Gerry Adams (Random House, 448 pp., $25.95)

RUTH DUDLEY EDWARDS

THERE wasn't much to laugh at in this plodding compilation of lies, damned lies, and clichés, but one scene briefly lifted my gloom. It was March 1998, the negotiations that would culminate the following month in the Good Friday Agreement were intensifying, and, like several other Irish politicians, Gerry Adams was in Washington for St. Patrick's Day. President Clinton, explains Adams, who is a master of the euphemism, "was going through a difficult time in his personal life and looked a little drawn," yet somehow he found the time and energy to have a meeting with Adams in the Oval Office. "While most of our discussions were about Ireland," says Adams, "I also raised the Middle East situation with him, as well as the question of Cuba and the huge problems suffered by Third World countries crippled by debt. I urged him to cancel Third World debt and I asked him to use his influence to get other countries to do the same." So there we have the Leader of the Free World—in trouble for fibbing—sitting in his own office being unctuously lectured on foreign pol-

Ruth Dudley Edwards is a historian, journalist, and mystery writer. Her books include *The Faithful Tribe: An Intimate Portrait of the Loyal Institutions.*

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icy by a terrorist and mass murderer who lies for the planet.

The effrontery of Adams's lies is truly breathtaking. In this book, just as in his first volume of autobiography, he insists he was never in the Irish Republican Army (IRA), an organization he claims is completely separate from Sinn Fein, the political party of which he is president. Yet the truth is that for more than 30 years, Adams has been a senior figure in the IRA. In 1972, it was Adams who was in charge in Belfast on what became known as Bloody Friday, when 20 bombs killed nine people and injured 130. It was Adams who approved the kidnap, torture, and murder of Jean McConville, a mother of ten whose offense was to have comforted a dying soldier.

In his decades on the seven-man IRA Army Council, Adams has authorized bombings and shootings that have killed around 1,700 people and have maimed and desolated tens of thousands more. In this grisly business his closest IRA colleagues have been Martin McGuinness and Pat Doherty, both of whom, like Adams, run Sinn Fein as well as the IRA and are non-attending members of the British House of Commons. When the Sinn Fein leadership announces it is off to consult the IRA leadership, it is largely talking to itself.

"I'm telling the story of the Irish peace process," says Adams. "I can only tell my experience of it, my role in it. It is not my business to offer an objective account of events or see through someone else's eyes. My intention is to tell a story. It is my story. My truth. My reality." Well, it certainly isn't any normal person's reality. Quite apart from the glaring lies, there are his grotesque distortions of Irish history.

Ireland has two tribes, whose main distinguishing feature is religion. When the ruling British government partitioned the island in 1921, the largely Roman Catholic 26 counties became a confessional state. Protestants were perceived by violent republicans as British and disloyal; those not murdered or terrorized out of the country by the IRA saw their numbers further diminished because in religiously mixed marriages children had to be brought up Catholic. Being a tiny minority, the Protestants accepted defeat, kept their heads down and their opinions to themselves: Only now is the story of what they endured becoming well known.

The very substantial Catholic minority in the six counties that became Northern Ireland and stayed part of the United Kingdom expressed their alienation from the state by refusing to participate in the political system and by insisting on segregated education; periodically, the IRA would do some bombing and shooting. Terrified of the enemy within, Unionists resorted to gerrymandering and discrimination to maintain power. What developed was what David Trimble—the most intelligent and articulate Unionist politician since partition and, unlike Adams, a good man—described in the speech in which he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize as "a cold house for Catholics."

In 1968, civil rights marches began in Northern Ireland; tribal violence followed, and the IRA came into its own. By 1972, after the British government had become reluctantly involved, all legitimate minority demands were met, but the IRA continued a terrorist campaign to force Ulster Protestants into a united socialist Ireland, while their loyalist counterparts murdered Catholics in order to keep Northern Ireland British.

This nauseating man has reinvented himself as a charismatic, philosophical, politically correct tree-hugger.

The IRA campaign failed dramatically: These days, most people in the Republic of Ireland as well as in Northern Ireland want to keep the island partitioned. You will not learn this from Gerry Adams's book, since—in *his* reality—all this mayhem has been a struggle for justice and equality. (Since he wants to sell this book in the U.S., socialism doesn't get mentioned.) You also will not learn that Sinn Fein, the richest political party in Ireland, is largely financed by IRA racketeering and has friendly links with terrorists in many parts of the world.

Throughout this terrible period, the British and Irish governments and most people on the island longed for the peace both sets of paramilitaries denied them. Then, in the late 1980s, Sinn Fein/IRA realized they were defeated and decided to pretend they had won and seek the best deal possible. Adams's work of propaganda describes in mind-numbing detail and with an ungenerous spirit the meetings and *démarches* and telephone calls and visits and papers and arguments and setbacks of the peace process.

Much as I despise Adams for his cruelty, dishonesty, and hypocrisy, there is no doubt that he and his allies deserve some credit for eventually grasping that their squalid, sectarian war was getting nowhere. Nor can one doubt their energy, commitment, and cunning over the past several years as they fought their corner; they are ruthless and brilliant negotiators. Overall, however, theirs is a terrible legacy. Operating like Stalinists, they taught generations of children to hate their neighbors and have caused dreadful suffering to their own community as well as to those they see as the enemy. Even now, as Adams is fêted abroad as a peacemaker by idiots like Martin Sheen and cynics like the Clintons, back home republicans challenging his line are intimidated, beaten, and sometimes murdered.

On top of all that, this nauseating man has reinvented himself as a charismatic, philosophical, politically correct tree-hugger: "Dialogue happens every day in all our lives," he tells us. "Equality is good for everybody." He also passes himself off as a writer. Well, when I got to page 271, from sheer boredom I counted the clichés and on that solitary page netted these: "Unionist hackles were raised"; "No easy task"; "We had an ace up our sleeves"; "the slippery slope"; "the Sinn Fein organization was at full stretch"; and "we had to go for it." Anyone who encourages this man to write should be ashamed of himself. **NR**

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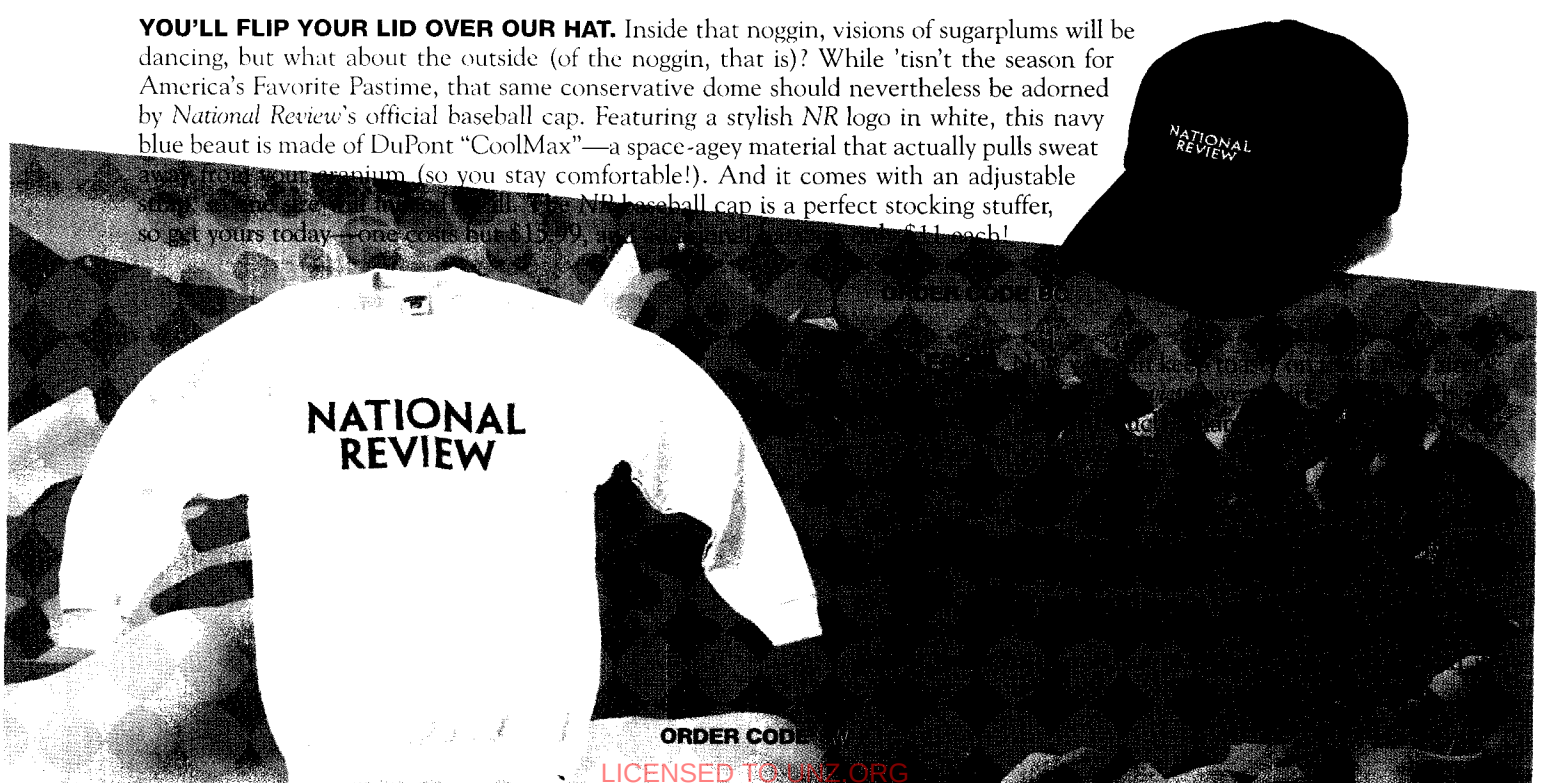

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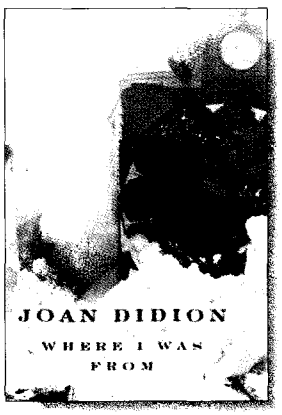

Where I Was From, by Joan Didion
(Knopf, 240 pp., $23)

JEFFREY HART

Where I Was From turns out to be a complex title, for this is by no means a conventional autobiography, but an accounting of an exceptional sensibility. It describes the "where" Joan Didion's distinctive novelistic prose came from, and also suggests its problems. Novelist Thomas Mallon recently described it as "one of the most recognizable—and brilliant—literary styles to emerge in America during the past four decades," and said Didion is so "famously distrustful of abstraction" that she likes to put "skeptical quotation marks . . . around all but the commonest nouns."

The "I" of the title refers to the sensibility in Didion's first novel, *Run River* (1963), both in its narrative discontinuities and its facticity. It may be that we should say "Didion's," to remind ourselves that this is but one of a great many Didions, perhaps more factually designated by a number than by the generalization of a noun. Writing in National Review, the astute Guy Davenport commented on *Run River*: "She knows the particular . . . desolation of soul that would seem to be built into hotel rooms, the rat's maze of six-lane traffic in cities. This awful confusion is reflected in practically all writing, but Miss Didion's version is distinguished by her terrifying sense of what has been lost and how irreparable the damage is."

The "Where" of the title thus becomes in this book not only California but a state of mind, the arena for Didion in which a personal agon takes place, an arena in which selected facts clash with various illusions or collective myths about California, which have been and remain powerful in the mind of California, and, more generically, in the myth-making capacity of the human mind itself. One such myth is that of Old California destroyed by newcomers (a myth that remained alive in her powerful 1968 book *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*). She writes today: "Much in *Run River*, as I believed when I was writing it and as I read now, some four decades later, has to do with the ways California was or is 'changing,' the detailing of which pervades the novel with a tenacious (and, as I see now, pernicious) mood of nostalgia."

The 'Where' of the title is not only California but a state of mind, the arena for Didion in which a personal agon takes place.

The idea of a genteel and mannerly Sacramento of her childhood, destroyed by the commercial developers and "flotsam of the new California" after World War II, was a sentimental illusion. The actual California, in its early days and now, she shows in *Where I Was From*, has been overwhelmingly a product of public and especially federal largesse: a subsidized Southern Pacific Railroad (enabled by the purchase, cheap, of federal land); vast federally subsidized farms and cattle ranches; colossal dams and irrigation projects, state and federally funded, that turned the great Central Valley from a desert into an agricultural bonanza; and an economic network, made possible by the real Gold Rush in Washington, D.C., that put stock tickers in thousands of farm houses.

Didion includes here a very fine literary and economic analysis of Frank Norris's novel *The Octopus* (1901), about the extraordinary reach and political power of the Southern Pacific Railroad. We learn that some of her ancestors, genuine pioneers, started out with the ill-fated Donner expedition but split off before the cannibalism in the deep snows of the Sierra Nevada range. With no small irony, the dust jacket shows a locomotive of the Southern Pacific pushing through such deep snows amid those mountains. Didion reminds us of how much the defense and aerospace industries have done to create the present southern California, essentially continuous with the old, with its gigantic, uniform subdivisions, with their anomie and manic sexuality (and, no doubt, enthusiasm for John Wayne movies). But the California Dream continues to be celebrated, amid much else in song and story, in the popularity of such kitsch as the luminous mountains of Bierstadt and windows of Thomas Kinkade.

So in her fiction Didion has been purging the myth through particularity, wary of nouns as such, sensing their generalizing nature. Yet the negative teleology of the word "From" in her title here cannot but issue ultimately in sterility. This dilemma goes as far back as the beginnings of Western thought: the sandstorm Heraclitus saw of particulars becoming an unknowable and nameless flux. The despair of the pre-Socratics became ultimately the transcendent Ideas of Plato, "Beauty bare," in Millay's words.

Didion's powerful mind and acute sensibility have resulted in the repetitious and anemic quality of her recent fiction. Her reader, submitting imaginatively to that prose, may achieve independent unity in a headache.

She unquestionably realizes that the best modern writers, aware of the sterility of flux, have sought paradigms of form, as Stephen Dedalus tried to "forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race"; as the later Joyce used a universal "mythic method" on his Odyssean quest; and as Eliot developed a

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special sense of the "tradition" from Homer through the present, but one reaching far back behind Homer, which, contemplated with sufficient intensity, can form a "simultaneous order." Ezra Pound's own Odyssean quest petered out among the glittering particulars along the Aegean shore, but Pound was not famous for intellect.

It is not yet clear whether Joan Didion—her uniqueness deserves that this generalization be sensed as a particular—will end up in the nowhere of a sandstorm of particulars, as far from possible from "where I was from"; or find, instead, a paradigm—perhaps of universal order—implicit in syntax itself as well as in her authentic experience. We are informed by her dust jacket that Didion now "lives in New York." That city does possess still palpable history, a great architecture, a famous spirit, and neighborhoods: thus much there there. Los Angeles it is not; hope lives. **NR**

■ SHELF LIFE ■

Light in the East

MICHAEL POTEMRA

WHY not welcome the holiday season with a truly hope-inspiring book? In *Jesus in Beijing: How Christianity Is Transforming China and Changing the Global Balance of Power* (Regnery, 344 pp., $27.95), David Aikman tells a surprising and important story. A former *Time* magazine Beijing bureau chief, Aikman describes how Christianity—despite ongoing persecution by the Communist government—has quietly become a major force in the life of the Chinese people. The Chinese police admit, privately, that there are some 25 million Christians in the country; but Aikman points out that "both Chinese within China and visiting outside observers generally believe that the numbers of Christians who attend churches not approved by the government—unofficial, so-called 'house churches'—may exceed by a factor of three or four those under the various Chinese government-approved umbrellas. In effect, the number . . . may be closer to 80 million."

Aikman interviewed many Christians, in various parts of China and from many walks of life. He is impressed by their evangelistic commitment in the face of repression, the erratic but brutal government measures that make Christianity's burgeoning—"especially within China's political and cultural establishment"—all the more remarkable. "It is possible," he writes, that "Christians will constitute 20 to 30 percent of China's population within three decades." The situation of Christians in China today is similar to that of the early Church in the Roman Empire: A passionate and rapidly growing core of believers is offering answers—and hope—in a faltering but still powerful geopolitical colossus in search of a new identity now that its old gods (Jupiter, Marx) have failed. The grassroots "house churches" are fervent in their profession of what we would recognize as Protestant Christianity. But Aikman notes that even most of the state-approved "Three Self" (Protestant) churches "teach a Christianity that is orthodox [and] evangelical," and also that the great majority of bishops in the state-approved "Catholic Patriotic Association" have "formally—albeit privately—sworn allegiance to Rome."

In 2002, Jiang Zemin, at that time Communist party chief, was asked by a dinner guest: "If, before leaving office, you could make one decree that you knew would be obeyed in China, what would it be?" Jiang, smiling, replied: "I would make Christianity the official religion of China." It is not known to what extent,

STILL LIFE WITH HENRI

for Don

You asked him back, and there he was
Standing with us. Backwards he came,
Back through death as you had asked,
Younger, dark-haired, but still the same.

You sat stiller than he was, grim,
Uninvolved with the talk around you,
But when the conversation turned
To verse, at last, as it was bound to,

He bent toward the lines you read
And read them back with a teasing grin
As he would and did in earlier days
In that other world, the one we're in.

Whatever joy you would have had
In looking up and seeing him
Was lost, but only you looked sad.
He was upbeat, dapper and trim

With his circle of graying friends below,
His eyes glowing darkly at them this night,
Warm mouth shaping the words they do not hear . . .
". . . and you like it here? I can see how you might,

But I don't know."

—OLIVIA ELLIS SIMPSON

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precisely, he was joking. But it is notable in itself that the chief Communist in the world's largest Communist country would have Christians on his mental radar screen. Their presence is quiet, but significant—and will only become more so.

■ David Horowitz is a splendid provocateur and a fascinating character. *Left Illusions: An Intellectual Odyssey* (Spence, 497 pp., $29.95) tells his story in his own words—through 43 selections edited by Jamie Glazov. Explicitly autobiographical chapters from Horowitz's memoir, *Radical Son*, are supplemented by polemics from four decades of participation in the political wars. On the Cold War, race, education, and countless other issues, Horowitz's voice has been bracing; Camille Paglia was correct when she praised him for having "the true 1960s spirit—audacious and irreverent, yet passionately engaged and committed to social change." Horowitz has observed that in our time, "the Left controls the culture, and with it the political language. Therefore, in America, reactionaries will continue to be called 'progressives,' and reformers, conservative." This is changing, thanks in no small measure to the intellectual pyrotechnics of David Horowitz, on sizzling display in this book.

He is the kind of principled thinker who is genuinely devoted to his "side," but even more devoted to telling the truth as he sees it. He recounts that he once accepted a speaking invitation from conservative students at a college in Oregon; he subsequently learned that his student sponsors had received funding from the backers of an antigay ballot proposition. Horowitz didn't soft-pedal his disagreement with them. "In an interview prior to my speech for the student paper . . . I said that conservatives who supported [the antigay ballot measure] were abandoning their own core principles, including the commitment to individual liberty and limited government. If the initiative passed, what principle, I asked, would prevent a future government from declaring conservatives themselves 'abnormal, wrong, unnatural, and perverse'?" His speech was then heckled by . . . no, not the conservatives, but by gay-activist fanatics who "would leap from their chairs to rant at the podium." The irony was not lost on Horowitz, who challenged the hecklers: "What's the matter with you? . . . I'm a conservative and I've come all the way to Portland to defend your rights to be who you are. Why are you trying to prevent me from speaking? Are you *nuts*?"

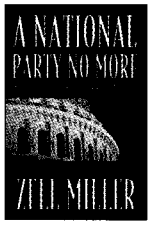
That is the voice of a truth-teller, exasperated that people can have agendas other than truth-seeking; it is the voice of an experienced man who nonetheless retains his innocence. David Horowitz is a good man, and we—not just conservatives, but Americans generally—are lucky to have him.

■ Kudos to Encounter Books for publishing an English translation of Jean-François Revel's *Anti-Americanism* (176 pp., $25.95), in which the author exposes the ill-informed and intellectually shabby assertions that form the core of anti-American sentiment abroad. He quotes, for example, Japanese philosopher Yujiro Nakamura: "American culture has always glorified physical and mental health and disdained what hides amid the shadows of human nature: the weaknesses and shortcomings. . . . Such a civilization is the vehicle for a unidimensional vision of the world." To which Revel replies: "Evidently, Nakamura has never read Melville, Poe, Hawthorne, Henry James, Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, or the Scott Fitzgerald of *The Crack Up*, to mention only a few explorers of the depths." This book reached the top of the bestseller list in France last year: a harbinger of European spring?

■ University of Virginia historian Robert Louis Wilken takes pains to point out that his latest book, *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought: Seeking the Face of God* (Yale, 368 pp., $29.95), is not a history of the thought of the patristic period. But it *is* something arguably more important: a sensitive, essayistic overview of how pre-medieval Christians engaged in the life of the mind, and the role that intellect played in their work and worship.

What comes through most clearly in this lucid book is the centrality of the Bible for the early Christians; their thought, Wilken points out, was distinguished by "the interplay between biblical text, the spiritual reality discerned in the text, and theological reasoning. . . . [The goal] was to provide a unified interpretation of the Scriptures, one that was comprehensive, centered on the triune God, and definitive." A key example of their exegesis comes from Augustine. Psalm 105 says of God, "Seek his face always"; but if God has revealed His face to us, we have found it—so how can we continue to seek it? Augustine comments that we should "seek as those who are going to find, and find as those who are going to go on seeking." Wilken sees in Augustine's analysis a commitment to remember, with ever-deepening understanding, God's self-revelation; in this, it is representative of the thought-world of the Church fathers. This excellent book is a window into a very rich intellectual world.

■ With the retirement of Georgia Democrat Zell Miller, the U.S. Senate loses one of its most impressive members. He has just published a memoir, *A National Party No More: The Conscience of a Conservative Democrat* (Stroud & Hall, 237 pp., $26), which offers an unsparing indictment of the direction of today's Democrats—and some sound advice and analysis: "There is always a lesson to be learned from studying the British. Remember how the Conservative party with towering figures like Margaret Thatcher dominated that country's politics for 18 years until the Labour party led by Tony Blair was able to reclaim power? It happened because Blair took his party kicking and screaming toward the middle of the political spectrum. The extreme left wing of the party was obliterated . . . If Clinton had followed through and governed as he had campaigned, it would have happened here for the Democrats." Clinton appears once again as the Democrats' Nixon—the gifted leader who used all his political skills for personal short-term victories, and left his party worse off than he had found it. Someday, though, just as Republicans found their Reagan, the Democrats might find their Miller . . .



■ *Crisis* magazine publisher Deal Hudson is one of America's leading Catholic jour-

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nalists. In his new memoir, *An American Conversion: One Man's Discovery of Beauty and Truth in Times of Crisis* (Crossroad, 189 pp., $22.95), he describes his journey from Southern Baptist to Catholic—a trajectory that was marked by his overarching desire to unite theology with the pursuit of beauty. Hudson describes a key moment, when he is reading Aquinas on a spring afternoon: "I was sitting beneath a tree and a bird feeder. A redbird had arrived for a feeding . . . As I turned that phrase over and over in my mind, 'everything that exists is good,' the redbird began to sing and somehow that phrase was taken up into the bird's song, and for a moment . . . the bird was singing the saint's words, the words and the song were one and the same thing."

Central to Hudson's theology is gratitude for God's creation. He quotes the great Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar: "Whoever sneers at her [beauty's] name as if she were the ornament of a bourgeois past—whether he admits it or not—can no longer pray and soon will no longer be able to love." The story of Hudson's quest for truth, as well as beauty, is a vivid account of one man's journey to the only destination at which human hearts may truly rest.

■ In England, the period between John Henry Newman's conversion in 1845 and the beginning of Vatican II in 1962 was a golden age for Catholic writing. A good introduction to the central figures in this story is provided by Ian Ker in *The Catholic Revival in English Literature, 1845–1961: Newman, Hopkins, Belloc, Chesterton, Greene, Waugh* (Notre Dame, 231 pp., $25). As Ker's analysis makes clear, the six authors he examines were not writers who happened to be Catholic, but Catholic writers in the most intimate sense: Their literary work was shaped and informed by their religious faith.

The genius of Catholicism is to be incarnational, "at home" with the sacred. Newman complained that the Protestants of his day "condemn Catholics, because, however religious they may be, they are natural, unaffected, easy, and cheerful, in their mention of sacred things; and [the Protestants] think themselves never so real as when they are especially solemn." One need not accept Newman's generalization outright to see the kernel of truth in it: Catholicism is a sacramental life, in which the things of God are handled matter-of-factly, as part of life in the world. This is the key to Ker's understanding of his subject; and even readers who are already very familiar with the work of the six writers will find this book highly rewarding. **NR**

■ BOOKS IN BRIEF ■

Twentieth-Century Attitudes: Literary Powers in Uncertain Times, by Brooke Allen
(Ivan R. Dee, 256 pp., $26)

In the introduction to this, her first collection of essays, Brooke Allen declares: "Really good writers do not write well *in spite of* the foibles, prejudices, and fallacies of their times; instead they crystallize these oddities into something universal, create archetypes rather than characters or situations. . . . [The 20th] was a colorful and grotesque century, and it produced a wide variety of odd attitudes."

Just who were these "really good writers"? Therein lies the joy of this collection, most of which first appeared in *The New Criterion*, where I am an editor. Allen presents what some might call a revisionist reading of the age: Steinbeck and Mailer, out; Isherwood and Henry Green, in. She elevates the century's marginalized authors—the gossips, the unbelievers, the ones who took some distance, wisely, we might now say, between themselves and the big ideas around them. We therefore learn about Green: "Throughout the thirties (the decade in which . . . all [his] contemporaries . . . were producing literature of passionately left-wing inspiration) Green was engaged in the painstaking composition of *Party Going*, a novel that dwells almost exclusively upon the fatuous doings of a group of rich and aimless young people." And Christopher Isherwood: Although he "made an unremitting effort to impose a serious structure on his life, his strong suit, ultimately, was frivolity." We also run into Harold Ross, James Thurber, Evelyn Waugh, and of course the Mitford sisters (Nancy was "a truly original light novelist and world-class practitioner of the art of tittle-tattle"). The result is enlightening, fun, eminently readable, and wonderfully, woefully politically incorrect.

—JAMES PANERO

Mayada, Daughter of Iraq: One Woman's Survival Under Saddam Hussein, by Jean Sasson
(Dutton, 304 pp., $24.95)

Mayada Al-Askari comes from a long line of prestigious Iraqis. Her famous family was respected by many, including Saddam Hussein. Herself an acclaimed writer and recipient of many awards, Mayada was able to save numerous people from imprisonment and death through her friendship with the director of the secret police. Despite the turmoil and devastation that Iraq suffered under Saddam, her family's prominence and their connections within the Iraqi government kept her safe—that is, until the fateful day she was arrested and thrown into the Baladiyat prison complex by Saddam's secret police. *In Cell 52, she* joined a group of 17 "shadow women" whose innocence meant nothing to their captors; she was tortured and imprisoned for almost a month without trial.

Her painful story, as documented in this fine book by Jean Sasson, is made even more terrifying by the fact that Mayada was one of the fortunate ones: Sheer luck enabled her to escape to Jordan with her life and her children. We are left only to wonder about the Iraqis who were secreted away to rot in prisons unbeknownst to their loved ones because of the paranoid rumblings of their monstrous president.

—MEGHAN KEANE

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■ CITY DESK ■

Christmas Gala

RICHARD BROOKHISER

YOU'RE invited to a gala!

When. New York galas cluster in the "holiday season," the time of Frosty, Rudolph, and roasting chestnuts that spreads backwards from what used to be Christmas all the way to Halloween (Thanksgiving, once a mighty holiday of its own, survives only for poulterers and family counselors). It is a festive time of gifts, parties, and no religious impedimenta, so get in the spirit.

Where. Unless the organization inviting you has access to some special space, like the great hall of the New York Public Library, galas are held in those pseudo-special places in midtown, which are the ballrooms of older hotels. Modernism has never visited them; the aesthetic templates are Versailles, with a touch of Broadway. Be grateful for those fruited cornices: Gala spaces in the hinterlands look like Gitmo.

Attire. If business attire is permitted, now is the time to wear tartan, velvet, or blanket plaid; what are you saving them for—church? If the invitations specify black tie and you are a man, rejoice, for now our sex assumes a momentary superiority. The dinner jacket is simple, striking, democratic. Youth and age, the blueblood and the fireplug, the model and the homunculus all look alike in black tie. (Avoid white jackets or colored shirts unless you want to be mistaken for a musician.) Women at formal functions, by contrast, go into eclipse, tottering on death shoes in strange concoctions with inappropriate bodices. Don't worry, ladies: Your sartorial pumpkins can turn back into coaches by 11 o'clock.

Drinks. The one thing even the most badly organized gala does well is the hour of drinks before the main event. The bar area is cramped, crowded, and noisy as a subway platform. But drinks, unlike trains, are always there. This is a last lingering legacy of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant founders of our culture, since the WASP approach to liquor always wavered between temperance and alcoholism, and at galas the latter prevails. Watch your intake, because the hour of drinks is the only chance you will reliably have to talk. At dinner, the vagaries of assigned seating make conversation problematic, while the distractions of service and of the program make it almost impossible. There is always a sort of seventh-inning stretch in which people try to circulate, but all those tables and chairs make movement as difficult as a punt return. Don't drink so much now that you become deaf and shouting, say nothing foolish to the blonde hair you have just met that looks so charming (you look less so), and remember that the wine will flow with dinner.

Who. It is a point of journalistic honor never to pay to attend such functions. Yet, since their purpose is raising money, many of the guests have paid. Since they do not belong to your world, they can be worth probing: If they know something, it's probably something you do not. They will be supplemented by employees of the enterprise that is giving the gala, and by rising and falling celebrities. Seating is an iron and unsentimental indication of one's worth in the eyes of the world. At age 48 I can reliably expect to find myself in mid-room. The remainder of my active life will reveal how close I get to the front tables, before I feel the inevitable backward tug of re-entry that attends the approach of obscurity and silence.

Food. The influence of the CIA (the Culinary Institute of America) reaches even into the kitchens of the old hotels, so that appetizers, vegetables, and dessert have become more tartified, though not better. For entrees, fish is always bad, chicken usually so. But the old hotels can produce several hundred servings of beef that is pink and warm, or at least not gray and not cold. The servers are all Hispanic. You are no more likely to see the grave black waiters of the Union League Club than you are to see Ulysses Grant.

Speeches. The point of a gala is its program, which consists of speeches, which for the most part mean irritation. Galas are not as bad as political conventions or professional conferences, but they come in third. Public speaking like all other talents is withheld from most of us, and the schools long ago stopped supplying serviceable rudiments. The result is that mikes appall and fascinate; put in front of them, most people cannot speak well or briefly. Introducers introduce other introducers. Words flow from the sound system (perhaps there is a video) but in the silence that has fallen over the tables where you sit, the evening slips towards funk. Why did I come? The invitation arrived months in advance, when your future was as empty as the high plains. Naturally you accepted. Now you are embedded in the event, which is itself embedded in all the other crowding events of your life. Where did they all come from?

A word fitly spoken, says the Bible, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. What are galas made of—silver foil? It is hard on main speakers to make them run such races, and not all succeed. If the main speaker is good (there is a 50–50 chance) he will be winged and nicked by his audience, which, in the nature of crowds, will miss all but his broadest jokes. Two fresh thoughts make an evening well spent; three make a precious jewel.

Exit. Afterwards people may want to schmooze. Don't wait. It is the holiday season, so you have brought a coat. Outside there may be weather. Walk to exit, coat check, front door, sidewalk, and cab, looking neither to the left nor to the right. With determination and luck you will soon be home. Only the brave deserve the fair.

As you buckle yourself up, weary and stimulated, remember. You have never been hungry; you make your living doing what you like; you have seen six interesting people. It is the holiday season. Give thanks.

RSVP. **NR**

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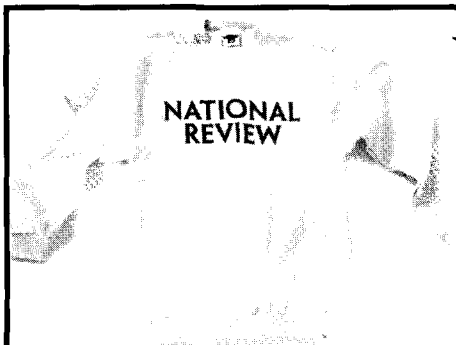

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

The Day of the Leisure Class

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 14

EVERYBODY sell! was the slogan of William I. Nichols years ago when he headed up *This Week*, the largest-selling Sunday supplement of the day. The genial Harvard-trained publisher had been greatly impressed on learning that 66 percent of the GNP is generated by sales. If nobody bought, nobody would produce except for his own account, and there are only that many potatoes a consumer can eat, or skirts she can wear. So he must entice others, who themselves simultaneously entice other consumers. It is for this reason that inventive merchants devise not only skirts and potatoes, but all those things the socialists, notably Thorstein Veblen a hundred years ago, condemn as merchandise that can only be classified as whetting the appetite for conspicuous consumption.

But Mr. Veblen had not been shown the wares of Brookstone, Inc., whose catalogue arrives in plenty of time to plan for Christmas. Consider—before you go off on one of those socialistic complaints about conspicuous consumption—the problem of grilling a steak. What are you expected to do, while waiting for it to finish cooking? Just stand there? But that is an inefficient allocation of energy. Along comes the Grill Alert! It is a "talking, remote thermometer [which] lets you spend less time at the grill or oven, and more time enjoying the holidays."

The catalogue explains how to do this. "1) Insert the transmitter probe into entree. 2) Attach wireless receiver to your belt. 3) Relax while Grill Alert monitors the cooking."

Do you need to keep your eyes trained on the receiver to tell you how things are going with the steak? *Not on your life!* "A voice will prompt you announcing when the food is cooked to your liking." If he had had one of these, Veblen could have saved the time to write another book about the leisure class.

If you are cooking for more than just a few people, you will want to guard against the problem of misidentifying which is the seat of a particular guest. Things get so *confused* at parties, don't they? Well, now you can just look for the wine glass of, say, the guest who wants her steak medium well. "Keeping track of your beverage has never been so simple or so much fun. Just attach this lighted charm to easily recognize your glass among all the others. The charms come in red, blue, white, yellow, purple, and green and operate with the press of a button." The industrial revolution never sleeps.

Those who scoff at the inventive turn of American merchandise would do well to pause over the revolutionary Ambient Orb.

"How's the market doing? Ambient Orb changes color in response to stock market fluctuations giving you an at-a-glance picture of your financial position."

And you need not be especially alert to track the economy. Alan Greenspan, presiding over the Federal Reserve, need only make sure that his color vision is relatively keen. "Using wireless technology, Ambient Orb glows different colors to reflect changes in the stock market. Preset to track the Dow, Ambient Orb can be set up to track the S&P 500, American Stock Exchange, Nasdaq Composite, Nasdaq 100 and Russell 2000."

The Ambient Orb, which is about the size of a small pumpkin, will glow green when the market is up, yellow when stocks are somnolent, and red "when it's time to call your broker." It wouldn't be a bad idea to place an Ambient Orb in front of the Democratic presidential candidates when they meet and argue every fortnight, so that market effects during their two hours together can be instantly assessed, giving Gen. Wesley Clark time to change his positions on economic policy according as Ambient Orb goes green or red. Who can deny that Veblen simply did not have the foresight to see what could be devised to serve the leisure class and the great American public?

Judicial Impasse?

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 18

THE extravaganza in the Senate is designed by GOP management to highlight the Democratic threat of filibuster to stop nominees by President Bush to the circuit courts. The handiest counter-argument, used by critics of the GOP maneuver, is the old "tu quoque"—you Republicans did the same thing to our nominees back when Clinton was president. Mr. Al Hunt, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, presses home that point, but tends to ignore relevant particulars. It is true that 60 Clinton judicial nominees "didn't even get the courtesy of a floor vote." But many of these nominees hadn't even got through the Judiciary Committee. You are not entitled to a floor vote until after you have got a committee endorsement. And such endorsements are not based entirely on the abstract qualifications of the candidate. Politics suppurates from the scene. Maybe the candidate had a Youthful Folly which the president was willing to ignore? Maybe the president didn't know about it, but along comes the FBI report, unearthing the Youthful Folly, which one or more senators predictably won't sit still for. Better to let the nominee sit around and do nothing?

What about the nominee whose name appears because the boss in Chicago wants to please an important friend? So the White House goes along, even though that dude is not going to end up on the bench. But for the rest of his life he will wear that ribbon on his lapel, Presidential Nominee for the Circuit Court.

But the fight in the Senate has to do only in part with procedure. What makes the issue boil is the ideological heat. There are constitutional questions raised, and the Supreme Court is the accepted alembic in these matters. No one of the four nominees the Democrats are holding up has been appointed to the Supreme Court, but the age of sev-

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eral justices there, and of many judges in the lower courts, is advanced, so that there will be much judicial traffic in the next period. If Mr. Bush gets another term, he will heavily influence the composition of the judiciary nationwide.

Yes, we need to know, as Mr. Hunt reminds us, the answers to several questions. Are there to be any limitations on civil rights statutes based on the post-Civil War constitutional amendments? Can the scope of Congress in regulating commerce be limited? Will rights granted to the disabled be extended indefinitely? How far is the inflamed marathon to separate church and state supposed to go? We may trust in God, but we may not be permitted to say so on government premises.

What is lost is the search for judicial temper. The ostensible challenge of the judiciary is to apply minds unlocked to the weighing of questions coming in for fresh exegesis. But those who seek out open minds in bright and learned advocates face one thorny problem, which is *Roe* v. *Wade*. Mr. Hunt acknowledges that "the Democrats emphasize [that issue] too much." But that decision is this epoch's *Dred Scott* decision. One could not reasonably ask the courts, after 1857, to train their minds exclusively on other issues than the right of Congress to chip away at the institution of slavery. Hunt cites two circuit court nominees, Michael McConnell and John Roberts—"two of the most distinguished Bush appointees"—as being "outspoken advocates of reversing the *Roe* v. *Wade* abortion-rights decision."

That question—whether the unborn are human—is the central political and philosophical issue of our time, and the Democratic party, which does not allow to speak at its presidential conventions a Democrat who opposes *Roe* v. *Wade*, does what it can to protect the judicial flank from any Missouri Compromises that might loom, designed to interfere with abortion-at-will.

The only way a nominee for the Supreme Court can cope with that issue is to follow the lead of Clarence Thomas, who pretended not to have considered the question, when asked about it by the Senate Judiciary Committee. But can we get satisfactory candidates for the courts who plead nescience as their primary qualification?

Does Marriage Matter?

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 25

THE swirl of opinion that came in after the ruling of the Massachusetts court tells its own story, which is that the judicial arm has achieved a moral standing not even dreamed of by Cotton Mather. Witness the failure of the two major political parties to take corporate positions on gay marriage. The Republicans, reflecting the 75 percent of their members who disapprove the ruling, have criticized it but have not gone so far as to call formally for a constitutional amendment. There is talk of an amendment, but talk also of the unwisdom of traveling in that decisive way. And on the other side, 52 percent of Democrats disapprove of gay marriage, but there is certainly no talk of constitutional intervention by any Democratic candidate for president. This is substantially owing to the training we have had over three generations to the effect that the court is the moral arbiter of behavior. Democracy's temple.

There are lines of a political character drawn. The Defense of Marriage Act (1996) relieves the states from Full Faith and Credit obligations in the matter of same-sex marriages. Andrew Sullivan, the Catholic gay activist writer, hails the Massachusetts decision and informs his considerable constituency that all that is established by the ruling is that in that state, gay marriage must be sanctioned. This does not mean that Utah has to sanction it, because the Defense of Marriage Act successfully makes its way across the divide of Article IV of the Constitution. We have then an opportunity for the full bloom of federalism: gay marriages in those states that go along, forbidden where forbidden.

A qualifying legal point derives from the opinion itself. What the court narrowly (4–3) ruled was that the language of the state constitution of Massachusetts forbids the kind of distinctions that are enforced by limiting marriage to two-gender participants. The Commonwealth has 180 days in which to contrive language that is not discriminatory, but—is. The constitution might say that marriage is a union between two people who can create a third person. A different approach would be to distinguish between the nature of benefits conferred on couples who take on the burdens of raising children, and those who do not; though there would surely arise a Philadelphia lawyer conjoining with another Philadelphia lawyer to find something constitutionally objectionable in the very idea.

Dramatic revisions are coming up from the fever swamps of the anthropologists, who are saying: Why not just forget the institution of marriage? After all, 26 percent of Americans live alone, and about half of those who marry, proceed to get divorced. So why not a market solution to the whole business? Let the parties who decide to cohabit for more than a night, or even a month, devise an agreement of sorts having to do with how property should be distributed if they broke up. Oh yes, if there were children, how would custody be arranged? All the business about paying the bills and visiting rights—couldn't a thoughtful arrangement be made here? "In the last five years," says Carol Sanger, who teaches family law at Columbia Law School, "there's been much less written on 'why do we need marriage, it's an oppressive relationship,' and much more on alternative forms of marriage."

We do not know how the major political parties will come down on the question. David Blankenhorn, of the Institute for American Values, ruminates that the institution of marriage originated about 5,000 years ago in Mesopotamia, "when males were brought into the [mother-child] family." But that was done, back then, without reference to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, and its status is therefore properly in abeyance.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CONGRESS

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

Marital Strife

WERE you surprised by the Massachusetts supreme court decision? Of course not. If it had gone the other way, you'd have been stunned, shocked, awed; "surprised" wouldn't have begun to cover it.

That's the context in which the "gay marriage" debate takes place: There are no reliably "red states" in the judiciary. And that's why I can't see "heterosexual marriage" (dread phrase) winning out over the new, more "inclusive" variety. I don't support the Federal Marriage Amendment, because I believe in federalism. On the other hand, supporters of gay marriage are being supremely disingenuous when they claim that they want to see a thousand flowers bloom in America's marriage laws: gay weddings in Massachusetts, civil unions in Vermont, straights only in New Hampshire—a triumph of federal diversity. Even before the Bay State's decision, gay activists, noting the stream of American same-sex couples shuffling off to the Canadian side of Niagara Falls for their marriage licenses, were muttering that it's time to extend the Full Faith and Credit clause to Ontario. It's unlikely that gay citizens of Massachusetts fleeing to tax-free New Hampshire will be happy to downgrade themselves back to "partner" status.

I'm against gay marriage. I'm against it for what I think is a conservative reason. Marriage has been around for thousands of years. Sodomy, as a sexual act, goes back just as far, but homosexuality, as a recognized condition, dates only from the late 19th century, and gayness, as a 24/7 social identity, is of even more recent vintage. Who's to say it isn't a passing phase?

I'm not being entirely flippant. On the whole, I'm happy to take a chap at his self-identification: If a fellow who's one-sixteenth Cherokee wants to become a militant activist for Native Americans, where's the harm? But contemporary gay identity is a novelty. Even if one takes at face value all the historical figures posthumously claimed for the gay pantheon—e.g., Tchaikovsky—it seems unlikely that many of them, whatever their partiality to homosexual sex, would have wished to avail themselves of a permit from the town clerk in Massachusetts. I'll be interested to see what the forthcoming new bio-pic makes of the marriage of Cole and Linda Porter. Today, we would regard Porter as "living a lie," like the bishop of New Hampshire in his earlier guise as a heterosexual husband. But by all the evidence, whatever his sexual outlets, Cole adored Linda and she adored him and they loved their life together. Noel Coward thought the Fire Island scene was "sick sick sick." Sir Hardy Amies, the Queen's couturier and one of the least promiscuous homosexuals of my acquaintance, had the same partner for over 20 years but had no interest in mimicking married couples in public: "It is just too common for two men to go around together."

Gay identity itself is in a state of rapid change.

Now you can scoff at me for citing three sweet old queens from the day before yesterday. But that's my point. It's not that the legal status of homosexuality is in a state of rapid change, it's that gay identity itself is. That's essentially the argument the Episcopal bishops make, twisting themselves into pretzels to square the unhelpful Biblical strictures on homosexuality with their New Hampshire colleague's vigorous sex life: The Bible can't really be against homosexuality, says the bishop of Maryland, as homosexuality, in the sense we know it in 2003, didn't exist back then. But that logic cuts both ways. Because gay identity is evolving so rapidly, we don't yet know where it will settle—or even where it will be in 50 years' time. The present phase may one day seem as quaintly anachronistic as Cole Porter's lavender marriage. Does it make sense to discard the assumptions of millennia for what, in the scheme of things, may be no more than the fashion of a moment?

Surveying the wreckage heterosexuals have made of marriage these past 30 years, David Brooks nevertheless comes out in favor of gay marriage as an incentive to fidelity. For two grim decades, gay men have had the most urgent incentive to monogamy one could devise, and yet Andrew Sullivan, the most eloquent proponent of gay marriage, talks about the need for homosexual couples not to be constrained by a "single, moralistic model" that fails to take account of the "varied and complicated lives" of gay men.

Conservatives should be able to agree on at least this: that there are unintended consequences to every action, and therefore radical changes should not be made on slender majorities—certainly not slender majorities of seven-judge benches. I would guess one consequence will be that more people will choose to embrace a public identity of homosexuality. While that might be in their personal interest, I can't see why it's in the state's. What gives marriage its unique, immutable character is its role as an organizing principle of Western society. What happens when you tinker with that organizing principle—inaugurating instant divorce, common-law relationships, "partners"? Well, in Europe, as Brooks has noticed in another column, you wind up with 1.4 children per couple. Italian women whose mothers had six kids by the age of 23 now have one designer child at 39. In other words, the state's interest in this question is as basic as it gets: On the evidence of the last 40 years, when society experiments with traditional family models, it winds up with no children—and thus, as Europe and Japan are discovering, no future.

How will "gay marriage" change this? Will traditional marriage be strengthened by redefining it as no more than a vehicle for personal gratification, as the Massachusetts and Ontario courts have done? We don't know, and, given our recent track record on social re-engineering, that in itself should be reason not to do it. **NR**

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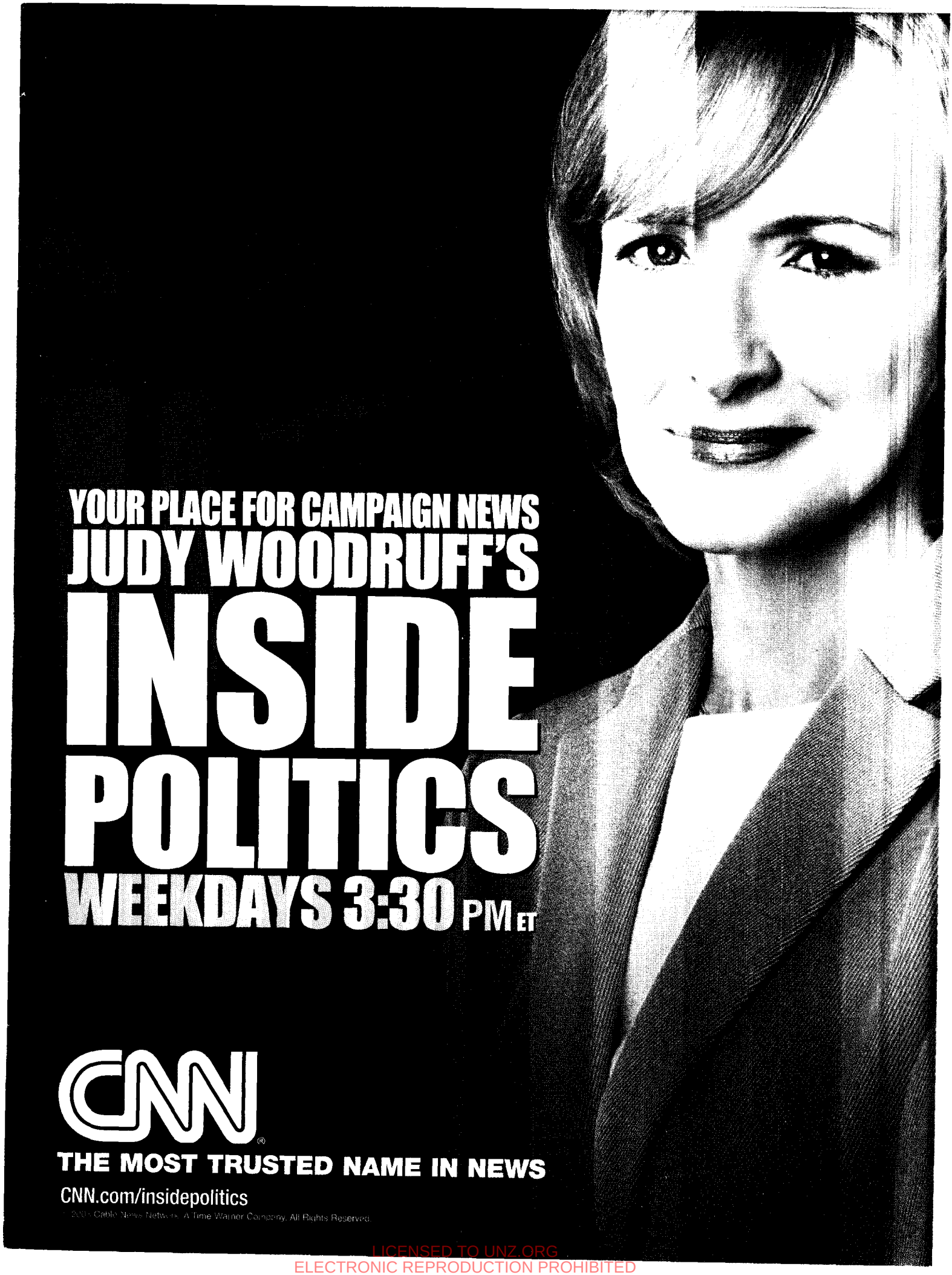

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